

**CASTLE POINT BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

**STRATEGY / POLICY FRONT COVER**



**Name of Strategy: Project Management**

**Date last updated: 14/08/07**

**Links to Council Priorities:**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Linked Yes / No?</b>
<b>Environment – Civic Pride</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Regeneration and Homes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Improving the Council</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Community Safety</b>	<b>No</b>

**Links to Other Strategies and Policies**

*Corporate Plan; Health and Safety Policy and Strategy; Risk Management Policy and Strategy; Procurement Strategy and Capital Strategy*

*Additional links to Corporate Communications; Performance Management and Financial regulations, Asset Management Plan (for Project compliance referred to therein), Financial Planning Strategy (considering how our resources are allocated and priorities set), HR Strategy & Workforce Plan (for how CPBC will train and equip its personnel to undertake change management).*

**Action Plan in this document?**

*No*

**Actions linked to corporate plan objectives?**

*Yes – generically linked to all objectives that require managed delivery*

**Officer Monitoring**

**Name of officer responsible for co-ordinating and progressing the action plan:** *No Action Plan but initiative champion from with Policy and Performance*

**Member Monitoring**

**Name of member champion or committee responsible for overseeing progress of the Strategy:**

*To be agreed*



# CASTLE POINT BOROUGH COUNCIL

## Project Management Strategy

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## **1. Introduction**

- This Strategy defines the Council's Project Management (PM) objectives and the principles that are to be used in the delivery of the Council's projects. It is designed to make a significant positive contribution to achieving the Council's corporate objectives and long term vision.

## **2. Background**

- In common with most other developing and improving businesses the Council undertakes initiatives that will benefit both the services it provides for its citizens and also the internal infrastructure that will enhance its overall capability to deliver these services.
- The Council sets out its programme for development through a series of corporate objectives and service specific action plans. Within these service plans are initiatives that have been approved for advancement, in the short to medium term. Each of these initiatives will be expected to conform to budgetary constraints, meet requirements on design and specification and be delivered to agreed timescales. As these elements are the key criteria that embrace Projects, the successful delivery of them depends on good management and more specifically a formal Project Management Framework (See the corporate document called "A Project Management Framework")
- A project is defined as:
  - “A temporary organisation that is created for the purpose of delivering one or more business products according to a specified business case (PRINCE 2)
  - Or
  - “A management organisation that is needed to produce a unique and pre-defined outcome or result at a pre-specified time using pre-determined resources”
- Each of the above definitions involves ensuring the following characteristics are adopted:
  - A finite and defined life span
  - Defined and measurable business product(s)/outputs
  - A corresponding set of activities or processes to achieve the business products/outcomes
  - A defined amount of resource
  - An organisation structure, with defined responsibilities, to manage the project.
- Projects are normally set up to deal with change. They can be large and complex, dealing with novel and unusual features, or small and relatively straightforward. All projects deal with a unique outcome and a unique set of products.
- The Council has developed a Project Management Framework (PMF) that provides Project Managers with guidelines on how to address their own specific initiative. All Projects will conform to the guidelines but will adopt only those features that match their specific requirements, as determined by the level of complexity and size of the project. A set of criteria based questions will be

addressed at the outset of each new initiative to ascertain what features must be followed.

### **3. Development Programme**

- All Projects will be sanctioned at the appropriate management level and each should fit within the short and longer term aspirations as outlined in the “Corporate Plan” (web link: <http://www.castlepoint.gov.uk/Documents/SPP/Corporate%20plan.pdf>).
- Many projects, because of their individual outputs, will be implemented on a piecemeal basis but will generally be part of a programme of change that will be determined by budgetary constraints and service delivery priorities. Clear lines of project need should be apparent and these must linked to one or more of the Council’s Key Priorities, which are:
  - **Environment – Civic Pride**  
*(We want clean streets, high quality maintenance of ‘green areas’, more recycling, improved children’s play areas and equipment, and effective planning policies.)*
  - **Regeneration and Homes**  
*(We want more local employment, affordable and life time liveable housing and the creation of business opportunities)*
  - **Improving the Council**  
*(We want to continually improve our services and build on success. We want to engage the community in local decision making, we want to focus on the needs of our customers and become a more efficient and effective Council providing good value for money services)*
  - **Community Safety**  
*(We want reduced levels of crime, working with police and our partners to tackle crime and the fear of crime)*

### **4. Budgets**

- A key constraint and the most likely factor that will determine the initial approval and ongoing success of new initiatives is the budget availability and an assurance that this will not be unduly challenged during the project lifecycle.
- New Projects will fall either within the proposals outlined in the Council’s “Corporate Plan”, (under “Our Priorities for Action”) the “Capital Strategy” (web link: <http://www.castlepoint.gov.uk/Documents/CapStrat2007.pdf> ) and/or the Councils internal Service Improvement Programme.
- Current Reviews/Projects can be accessed from the latest Corporate Plan (web link: <http://www.castlepoint.gov.uk/Documents/SPP/Corporate%20plan.pdf>) on pages 27 to 29.
- All projects will be subject to a rigorous budgetary challenge exercise to ensure that they are fit for purpose and stand up to business case interrogation. The approval process will include authorisation by the Council’s Chief Finance Officer (s151).

## **5. Approved Management Mechanism**

### Industry Standard

- Prince 2 (Project IN Controlled Environments) is a structured method for effective project management. It is an agreed industry standard used extensively by the UK Government and is widely recognised and used in the private sector, both in the UK and internationally.
- The Project environment and the supporting Project Management Framework are based on the principles of PRINCE 2 and the good practices developed by the Office of Government Commerce (OGC).

### Flexible Approach

- This Project Management Strategy and the related Project Management Framework outlines the formal approach to project managing the introduction of change. Users should appreciate that project management should sit alongside general good management practice.
- Adoption of the Project Management methodology should be a familiar exercise to established service managers in that it structures and formalises the way that initiatives and change are efficiently and effectively introduced.
- PRINCE 2, in its complete form, utilises all aspects of change management requirements. In practice many projects that the Council undertakes will not require such a comprehensive approach. Each project will therefore need to be tailored to reflect its specific needs. Project Managers and monitoring teams will be given assistance and training on understanding which parts of the methodology will be utilised to suit the differing scales of projects.

## **6. Standardisation of Approach**

### Training - Current Capabilities

- Managers and Officers that are required to undertake a project management role will need to know the principles to be adopted throughout the project and be trained to the appropriate PM levels to ensure correct standards are achieved and public assurance satisfied.
- It is essential that a common understanding of PM be achieved to ensure quality standards become an integral part of service delivery. All existing project managers will be vetted to establish the current levels of understanding and use of PM tools in the project delivery. A Gap analysis will be produced to identify the training needs required to bring officers up to the required levels as well as the introduction of those PM disciplines that need to be added to meet the designated standards.

#### Training - Ongoing Management

- All new projects will go through the initial evaluation stage to establish what criteria will apply to their overall management. Once established the person/s appointed to take the project forward, and assume the role of Project Manager, will have received appropriate training and demonstrated the capability to lead a project at that level.
- It is not envisaged that, with the level of project that the Council will undertake in the immediate future, full PRINCE 2 trained and accredited personnel will be required. However, this should not preclude Council staff from being trained and becoming accredited in PRINCE 2. In the longer term a body of knowledge will hold the Council in good stead for future needs without resorting to and relying on external “expertise”.

### **7. Public Accountability**

#### Accessibility

- It is essential, as part of the openness to information and also as part of meeting our citizens expectations on delivery of services, that the Council can demonstrate that it is meeting the needs of the community and addressing the initiatives in the correct fashion.
- To ensure that the Council is seen to be open and transparent the major projects that it plans to undertake have been captured within key Council documentation that can be viewed on the Council’s website. (See Section 4. Budgets).

#### Public consultation

- Whilst the projects will be managed internally and decisions made utilising the correct managerial procedures, the opportunity for public involvement should be considered. Ultimately the Council’s citizens should be the beneficiaries of the changes and as such are key stakeholders. It would not be prudent to undertake broad consultation on all projects but citizen awareness and feedback will be key to the ultimate acceptability and success of the project.

### **8. Assurance of Governance**

#### Ensured levels of decision making

- All projects will get approved to proceed from the agreed and correct management level. Decision making protocol for the lifecycle of the project will be agreed at the outset and will cover any change control procedures and ad hoc risk and issues management. In the initial stages of the Council’s Project Management development programme EMT will monitor all new initiatives and decide on reporting protocol.

#### Dynamic resolution of issues and assured progress

- Depending upon the nature of the project, i.e. size and scale, the monitoring and decision making will most likely be addressed on an exception reporting basis only. This means that all project progress will be deemed to be on target or issues are being managed without problem, unless advised otherwise.

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Anything outside of these criteria will be escalated to the appropriate management level to ensure the decisions to proceed have been authorized.

- Correct authorization levels will ensure that project decisions are not taken in isolation but due consideration is given to all related or dependent projects. As a result, the delivery programme for all services i.e. the big picture, can be reviewed and appropriate risk level assessments developed.
- Major Projects, and the programmes that they sit within, will be reflected in key Council Strategies and Plans. These will be amended at defined periods to provide the most up to date picture of events.

### 9. Risk

- Risk is a major factor to be considered during the management of a project. Project management must control and contain risks, throughout the lifecycle of the project, if it is to stand a chance of being successful.
- Risk is defined as *'the chance of exposure to the adverse consequences of future events'*. The management of risk is an iterative process and should not cease until the project is finished. Activity in this area will be higher in the initial set up stages, especially when the risk log is being established, however risk management will always be addressed when reviewing project progress. It will be the responsibility of the project manager and the project monitoring board to ensure that any external risks i.e. other project or programme risks, be picked up at the review stages and factored into the ongoing project plan.
- Project risks fall broadly into two categories – Business Risk and Project Risk. Both types will be administered at the correct management level to ensure that an appropriate level of attention has been applied. All risks will be evaluated and managed, as defined in the Project Management Framework and in accordance with the “Risk Management Policy Statement & Strategy” (web link:  
<http://www.castlepoint.gov.uk/Documents/Strategies/Risk%20Management%20Policy%20&%20Strategy.doc>).

### 10. Health and Safety

- All projects will comply with the Council's policies on Health and Safety (See “Health and Safety Policy and Strategy” web link:  
<http://www.castlepoint.gov.uk/Documents/Strategies/Health%20&%20Safety%20-%20Policy%20&%20Strategy.doc> ).
- It will be the responsibility of the Project Manager to ensure that standards have been met and that project documentation confirms this. The Project Monitoring Group will not be expected to check the validity and acceptability of this information but may challenge some of the issues as and when project changes are being addressed.

## **11. Procurement guidelines**

- Invariably projects will require varying levels of procurement of goods or services. The process for acquiring these must comply with the Council's contract procedure rules as set out in the Council Constitution as well as the procedures set out in the Councils "Procurement Strategy" (web link: <http://www.castlepoint.gov.uk/Documents/procurement%20strategy.doc> ).
- All such spend will be established at the outset of the project and will be included in the Project Initiation Document (PID). Spend levels may alter during the lifecycle of the project and these will be governed by the change control procedures and budget monitoring processes.

## **12. Shared Best Practice**

### Learning environment

- Projects have a particular and finite life but the outcomes will provide either an immediate and/or an ongoing (developing) benefit.
- It is unlikely that the completed project will be an exact mirror of that which was perceived at the outset. Changes will invariably happen that need to be addressed to ensure the project remains on track or, in some circumstances, is abandoned for the sake of prudence.
- Issues, problems and risk management are all areas that lend themselves to learning opportunities for future projects. The project benefits will be realised by the department or service from which it was initiated but the learnings are of wider benefit to the whole council. The Project Management Framework is equipped with suitable templates that allow for the capture of project experiences and these will be documented and managed corporately by the Councils Procurement, Policy and Performance section.

### Partnerships and shared working

- Over time the Council will undertake a number of individual projects and will endeavour to learn from those experiences to ensure that mistakes are not repeated and improvements are introduced into the management framework as an evolving process.
- The Council will, in collaboration with neighbouring authorities and as part of the greater PM user environment, attempt to gain a wider experience of project knowledge. Through sharing of project data and comparison of similar initiatives the Council would expect to get a more rounded understanding of how projects should be approached in order to develop a more efficient and unified attitude to change.

## **13. Benefits Realisation**

### Continuous Improvement

- This PM Strategy and the accompanying PMF will be continually reviewed and modified as considered appropriate, to meet the demands of PM methodology. These changes will take their lead from local experiences gained and industry approved methodologies. The general principles of PM

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have changed little over the past decade and it is only variations of the accepted practices that tend to be applied to different levels of change environments i.e. customised to suit need.

### **14. Government Agenda**

- The expectations of central government and respective auditing bodies is that performance management and project management are firmly embedded within the delivery processes. The Council will continue to encourage the use of both management tools and demonstrate that these will be the drivers to achieving efficient, effective and ultimately successful change delivery.