

4ps

review workbook

4ps Gateway Review 0
Strategic Assessment

gateway reviews

4ps **GATEWAYS**
a full service OGC Gateway™ provider

local government's project delivery specialist

Introduction

Gateway Reviews assist the delivery of new acquisition programmes and procurement projects in local government and their use is recommended in the Efficiency Review and the National Procurement Strategy. 4ps is a full service OGC Gateway™ provider and the 4ps Gateway Process examines programmes and projects at critical stages in their lifecycle to provide assurance that they can progress successfully to the next stage. It is designed to be applied widely to programmes and projects, including those that procure services, property/construction, IT-enabled business change and procurements utilising framework contracts.

Using this workbook

This workbook supports 4ps Gateway Review 0: Strategic Assessment; it is intended to support 4ps Gateway Reviews of programmes. It sets the programme-only review in the wider policy or corporate context.

The workbook provides review teams with key questions to ask and suggested evidence to support those questions. Because each programme is unique and because the focus of the review will change over the programme's life, the workbook should be used as a guide to the range of appropriate questions and evidence. In particular, it is important to note that much of the suggested evidence will not be available at the early stages of the programme. Questions may need to be adapted to circumstances; they are not a predetermined checklist of mandatory items.

Strategic Assessment

4ps Gateway Review 0 is applied at the start-up of a programme and repeated at critical points:

- At scheduled milestones such as the completion of a set of projects in the programme portfolio
- When there is a significant change to the desired outcome
- When the way outcomes are delivered must change or when it becomes apparent that the programme will not provide the necessary outcomes and needs to be reshaped
- When the programme's sponsors have concerns about the programme's effectiveness
- To learn lessons to transfer to other programmes when a substantial amount of successful delivery has taken place

The programme start-up process draws together the justification for the programme based on the policy or organisational objectives that are to be secured, an analysis of the stakeholders whose co-operation is needed to achieve the objectives and an initial assessment of the programme's likely costs and potential for success. The first 4ps Gateway Review 0 comes after the broad strategy for change has been set but before a public commitment is made and before a development proposal is put before a programme board, executive authority or similar group for authority to proceed. It focuses on the justification for the programme.

It provides assurance to the programme board that the scope and purpose of the programme has been adequately researched, that there is a shared understanding of what is to be achieved by the main players, that it fits within the department's overall policy or management strategy and priorities; and that there is a realistic possibility of securing the resources needed for delivery. The review will, in addition, examine how the work-strands will be organised (in sub-programmes, projects, etc) to deliver the overall programme objectives, and that the programme management structure, monitoring and resourcing is appropriate. In short, the first 4ps Gateway Review 0 aims to test whether stakeholders' expectations of the programme are realistic, by reference to costs, outcomes, resource needs, timetable and general achievability.

Subsequent 4ps Gateway 0 Reviews revisit the same questions to confirm that the main stakeholders have a common understanding of desired outcomes and that the programme is likely to achieve them.

Different types of change may be delivered by the programme:

- Making and delivering new facilities – typically, led by specification of the outputs required; clear view of what is required and scope well defined
- Changing the way the organisation works – led by a vision of the outcomes and benefits; typically some uncertainty about the change, but clear levers that can be used to achieve the vision
 - Policy change focused on changes and improvements in society, driven by desired outcome but likely to be very ambiguous and complex to define in terms of what it will involve. The scope may need to be revisited as uncertainty is resolved
- If a project is very large and/or complex, it is broken down into a series of related projects and managed as a programme.

4ps Gateway Review 0: Overview

The wider context of programme delivery

Programmes are delivered in the wider context of carrying forward Members' policy objectives and improving authority performance, as shown in the figure overleaf. For convenience, the relationships are shown in simplified form; in reality they are likely to be much more complex.

Once a way forward for delivery is identified, major policies and authority change programmes are often implemented as a programme. At the time policies – or change programmes – are announced, the means by which some aspects of them need to be implemented is clear, while other aspects need considerable policy development. Programme structures provide a means of managing progress at different rates while ensuring coherence and keeping the focus on the overall outcomes. The programme's potential to succeed is checked as it is being established using an 4ps Gateway Review 0. The review can be repeated whenever an appropriate milestone is reached or whenever the programme's usefulness or viability comes into doubt.

The programme will contain a number of linked sub-programmes, projects and other pieces of work. These are delivered in a co-ordinated sequence that will achieve the programme outcomes with the optimum balance of cost, benefit and risk. The programme's projects are reviewed at key decision points from start-up through to the point where they have contributed the benefits set out in the business case. Feedback from this final review informs the ongoing programme reviews.

The programme will be managed as part of a corporate portfolio of authority programmes, which may be competing for resources and may have changing priorities. In local government the authority's portfolio is kept under review by Members and the authority's management board who resolve any major priority or resource issues.

Programme or project?

Programmes are about managing change, with a strategic vision and a routemap of how to get there; they are able to deal with the uncertainty about achieving the vision. A programme approach should be flexible and capable of accommodating changing circumstances such as opportunities or risks materialising. It co-ordinates delivery of the range of work – including projects – needed to achieve outcomes throughout the life of the programme. Projects have definite start and finish dates, a clearly defined output and a well defined development path; benefits are achieved after the project has finished.

Tailoring the review

The same set of questions is used for every 4ps Gateway Review 0, but their focus is adjusted depending on the nature of the programme and the stage in its lifecycle. For example, the governance arrangements and stakeholder involvement may be the most difficult aspect of a cross-cutting programme; in contrast, the smooth management of transition to new ways of working may require the most attention where there is complex change. At the start of the programme the strategic priorities should be clear and the main focus will be on realism about what can be achieved. At subsequent stages managing the impact of change, risks and resources will become more important, and there may be the additional complexity of changing policy priorities. At programme closure, evaluating outcomes, the final review of the achievement of outcomes and identifying the lessons learned for future programmes will be the main features of the review.

The Wider Context of Programmes and the 4ps Gateway Review Process

