



## LEP – Sub Committee

### Growth Deal Management Board

**Private and Confidential: No**

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### Monitoring and Evaluation Sub Group

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#### Executive Summary

An update on discussions/decisions from the Monitoring & Evaluation Sub Group (M&E SG) on the 17<sup>th</sup> August 2015 in relation to the following points:

- Confirmed schedule of meetings
- Monitoring and Evaluation ITT
- HM Treasury AQUA Book
- Monitoring Reports Received

#### Recommendation

The contents of the report are noted.

#### Background and Advice

The Monitoring & Evaluation Sub Group (M&E SG) met on the 17<sup>th</sup> August 2015 and considered the following points:

1. Confirmed the schedule of M&E SG meetings as tabled for the Growth Deal Monitoring Board (GDMB) so all meetings are aligned.
2. Discussed the ITT:

Further to the GDMB (dated 8/7/15) where agreement was given to proceed with the ITT to undertake work associated with the Monitoring & Evaluation Framework, further work has been undertaken to prepare the ITT for formal release. In doing so, however, several points have been raised for consideration as below:

The Monitoring of the Growth Deal projects places certain requirements on the accountable body and project sponsors. These requirements are:



- All projects are expected to report quarterly on the top 3 metrics – "Expenditure", "Funding breakdown" and "In-kind resources provided." The remaining metrics are split into "Core Metrics" and "Project Specific Outputs and Outcomes" which are to be collected where relevant to the intervention, and "Additional Monitoring" for specific schemes.
- All Year 1 (2015/16) Growth Deal projects are subject to quarterly monitoring of those metrics which are required at this frequency and bi-annual or annual reporting for the remainder of their proposed outputs.
- As data owners, Project Sponsors are responsible for collecting and submitting their monitoring data to the Accountable body in accordance with a series of pre-agreed quarterly, bi-annual or annual timescales.

Therefore, the Accountable Body will fulfil the requirements for the scrutiny of ongoing monitoring. This will be undertaken by direct monthly or quarterly reporting by the project sponsor to the accountable body as part of the claims process. Links and communication channels are available to project sponsors by the accountable body to ensure regular and accurate progress, risks and issues are reported to fulfil stated the monitoring requirements.

Evaluation - this is the area that value can be added to the Growth Deal by the external organisation procured through the ITT.

The programme will include two levels of evaluation (project level and programme level), and will include formative evaluation, workshops and reporting arrangements. For all projects a general evaluation will be required and for 6 specific projects (to be chosen as exemplar or high risk projects) a more detailed evaluation and assessment will be necessary.

The ITT has been redrafted to clarify the above approach and clarify that the ITT is seeking an organisation to undertake the evaluation.

#### ITT Framework / Start Date discussion

The above approach was considered valid by the M&E SG, so the point at which the evaluation should commence was discussed. As the Growth Deal is a 6 year programme yet with few projects in delivery in year 1, and as a limited budget has been set aside for the external evaluation from 2015 to 2018, concern was expressed that commencement too soon would not realise the desired outcome from the external organisation. Yet there are advantages from having the organisation on board from day one so they are involved with schemes from the start and they could also compare different schemes and provide overall best practice etc.

It was agreed that:

- An assessment of the project delivery schedule would be made to inform the external organisation start date.
  - There are several schemes underway and as the appointment will take circa 3 months to point of award it is considered appropriate to continue with the procurement.



Appointing a framework (2-3 organisations) rather than a single one was discussed – this would provide better alignment of organisation to project but may hinder the overall programme evaluation.

It was agreed that:

- Appointing a framework of organisations would be considered.
  - This would make the overall programme evaluation difficult and each organisation may put forward different evaluation models. As such, it is recommended that a single organisation is sought.

### 3. The HM Treasury AQUA Book

This informative guidance on producing quality analysis for government has been assessed by the M&E SG to ensure the proposed growth deal evaluation ITT considers the points raised within it. There are some elements of the guidance which have been incorporated into the ITT, primarily around the need to assure the data being evaluated.

As we are required to report back to government, the ITT adopts some of the principles outlined in the Aqua Book to ensure compliance with our analysis, evaluation and reporting. As per the guidance, we will require that the quality assurance process is compliant and appropriate, that risks, limitations and major assumptions of the evaluation model/methodology are understood by the project sponsors and accountable body, and the use of the model/methodology output is appropriate.

### 4. Discussed the monitoring reports reviewed:

The templates for both the monitoring and claim form to be used for by projects for their quarterly or monthly submissions were shared with the group. The quarterly or monthly monitoring records updates, milestones, progress and risks of the projects to ensure timely delivery. The group agreed that these reports should be used for project monitoring.

The group were advised that the outputs on the claim form for the Runshaw College Science and Engineering project were not consistent with those on the Growth Fund Agreement. It is anticipated this is because the college were permitted to claim at risk prior to the signing of the Growth Fund Agreement and so added outputs and milestones to the claim form to demonstrate progress. The group were informed that the outputs would be amended on future claim forms to reflect those given on the Growth Fund Agreement.

The group were informed that all claims for current projects are up to date. The group reviewed the upcoming projects highlighted and were satisfied with progress.