



TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH

Framework for Project Management - Project Approval, Delivery and Monitoring

Internal audit report 6.22/23

Final

14 June 2023

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the use of secure portals for the transfer of information, and through electronic communication means, 100 per cent of our audit has been conducted remotely. Remote working has meant that we have been able to complete our review and provide you with the assurances you require. Based on the information provided by you, we have been able to sample test, or undertake full population testing using data analytics tools, to complete the work in line with the agreed scope.

Why we completed this audit

Transport for the North ('TfN') has been in a transitional phase with regards to projects in recent years. Historically, large programmes of work were undertaken with significant funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) such as Northern Powerhouse Rail, which was specifically designed to support the transformation of the North's economy by providing effective and efficient rail connectivity between the North's major economic centres. As a result of the scale of the programmes, a Project Management Office (PMO) was in place to manage coordination and interdependencies between programmes and projects.

During early 2021, TfN commissioned Nota Bene Consulting to advise on the management of strategic projects across the organisation, with a particular focus with how programmes engage with the Strategy Team. The consultant recommended that TfN establish an overarching way of working on strategy or policy associated projects and as a result of this recommendation, the Policy Development Framework (PDF) was produced

However, in 2021/22 the large programmes of work were transferred to the Department for Transport (DfT), and the operating budget and scale of further projects reduced and as such, it was identified that the PMO was no longer a necessity, and this was removed from the organisational structure. At the time of our review in January 2022, TfN has not introduced any alternative central arrangement in its place and the Policy Development Framework has not been formally rolled out. As such, delivery and reporting on individual projects are performed by individual Business Units, who are able to follow an agile approach to project management.

In consultation with Management, four projects of different scales and at various stages were selected to be considered as part of the review:

Project Name	Start Date	Cost/Funding
Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER)	May 2022	£160k funded through 2022/23 Business Plan
Connected Mobility Hub pilot;	April 2022	£72k funding from DfT
International Connectivity Policy Position	July 2021	£40k funded through 2021/22 Business Plan
Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) project (phase two)	Autumn 2021	£60k funded by DfT

For each of the four projects we held discussions with the Project Manager and other relevant individuals involved, in order to ascertain the process each project has followed from initiation through to delivery and the specific project management methods used in each case, bearing in mind that the organisation has promoted a degree of flexibility in this area for project teams. We completed the work with a view to identifying whether TfN would benefit from introducing an overarching project management framework in which consistent processes are followed across all Business Units.

Conclusion

Through our work we identified that there are elements of a consistent project management framework in use across the organisation, for example we confirmed that aspects of the existing Policy Development Framework are used by project teams. Overall, project approval, delivery and monitoring mechanisms vary across different projects and areas of the organisation.

Due to the diverse portfolio of projects, varying in scope and size, we appreciate that flexibility is needed to ensure project managers can tailor their approach to the needs of the project. However, in line with good practice and based on what we have seen in place at other organisations, we have raised seven management actions (five 'low' priority and two 'medium' priority) to further strengthen TfN's existing framework in this area. The actions will help to ensure more consistency across the key stages of projects, such as project inception and approval, and project close-out stages to ensure that projects receive a consistent level of scrutiny, whilst also enabling some flexibility within the delivery phase to allow project teams to tailor their approach to the needs of the project.

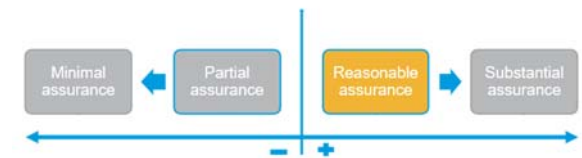
Following the issue of our draft report, we were informed by the Director of Strategy, Analysis and Communications that the Senior Management Team believe there is an opportunity to refine the framework, given the change in TfN's operating model, the nature of their work is less 'large projects and programmes' and more 'strategic advice'. The initial framework was created for a different TfN operating model. The Senior Management Team believe there is an opportunity to include within the

framework other key considerations when setting up new TfN workstreams, such as Equality Impact Assessment and arrangements for data sharing and GDPR compliance. Therefore, it has been agreed that a task and finish group from within the Senior Management Team will be formed to take forward the work on the project management framework, including reviewing and responding to the management actions within this report.

Internal audit opinion:

Taking account of the issues identified, the Board can take reasonable assurance that the controls upon which the organisation relies to manage this risk are suitably designed, consistently applied and effective.

However, we have identified issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure that the control framework is effective in managing the identified risk.



Key findings

We identified the following findings:



Through review of the existing Policy Development Framework (PDF) we noted that included as part of the proposed two-step project initiation and development process is the completion of a Project Initiation Document (PID). The template PID document produced by TfN requires the user to outline SMART objectives, project aims, deliverables, resource commitments (both internal and external), links to the Strategic Transport Plan, 'golden thread' considerations and other projects and risks relevant to the project. Through our testing in relation to the sample of four projects, we confirmed that PIDs in the template developed as part of the PDF were completed for two of the four projects. In one case we were informed by the Project Manager that a PID was completed, however, when requested we were not provided with a copy. In the remaining case, a PID was not completed.



For three of the four projects assigned roles and responsibilities using the Responsible, Accountable, Supportive, Consulted, and Informed (RASCI) matrix had been completed. We confirmed that this includes assigning roles at a strategic level. The matrix is recommended within the PDF however it is not mandatory for project teams to use this. In the remaining case we identified that roles and responsibilities had yet to be formally assigned for relevant individuals other than the Project Manager due to the infancy of the project. We have not noted this as an issue as the project is new and we were assured this will be done in due course.



Whilst we confirmed that Project Managers were in place for all four projects, we identified one instance whereby the Project Manager for one of the projects in our sample changed and no formal handover took place. We were informed that the previous Project Manager left the organisation, and the intention was to replace the role through recruitment, however as this did not materialise a last-minute

decision was taken to fill the role internally. As such, an informal catch up took place between the old and new Project Managers but no formal handover took place. As a matter of good practice, where there are changes within the RASCI matrix formal handovers should take place with key details and documentation shared.



Risk Champions have been allocated for each functional unit of TfN who have responsibility for maintaining the risk registers recorded within Predict risk management system, including any project-specific registers. Champions and other relevant individuals such as risk owners meet with the Risk Manager on a monthly basis to discuss 'very high' and 'high' risks and make relevant updates where necessary. We confirmed that a Risk Champion was in place for the areas which cover the four projects within our sample. We also confirmed by review of screenshots of calendar invitations that monthly meetings take place between the Champions and the Risk Manager. Furthermore, the Risk Manager advised us that where necessary changes are made to the Predict risk management system during the meetings.



As part of a walkthrough of the Predict risk management system with the Risk Manager we confirmed that risks are included within the specific Business Units' risk registers for the four projects within our sample. We also confirmed that risk owners are assigned, and risks are scored.



At the time of our review, there was no guidance or recommendations provided to project managers in relation to monitoring throughout the delivery phase of a project. The Interim Director of Strategy and Programmes explained that project managers are encouraged to use their judgement and knowledge based upon the size and scope of a project. Through our discussions with the Project Managers of the four aforementioned projects, and through review of supporting evidence, we identified large variances between the range of mechanisms used.

For example, we confirmed that the NPIER Project Manager has a detailed project plan in the form of a Gantt chart which tracks the tasks to be completed on a weekly basis. Whereas the Connected Mobility project did not have a project plan in place at the time of our review.

A project 'Interdependencies Tracker' was maintained by the PMO prior to its removal from the organisational structure of TfN. However, through review of the tracker we identified that it is no longer kept up to date and does not include all ongoing projects at TfN. The tracker provides cross-organisational insight outlining similarities, differences, linkages, drivers and trade-offs between projects and as such should be kept up to date. Furthermore, from an oversight perspective we noted that TfN does not have a register or record of all projects.

A lessons learnt standard template is in place and available on the intranet. Through review of the template we noted that it requires lessons learnt to be identified along with actions to be taken to ensure improvements are made in the future, furthermore the actions require implementation dates to be defined and action owners outlined. The template also includes a section for more broad reflections on things that went well which were planned and unplanned and unsuccessful elements.

Whilst we confirmed that a standard lessons learnt report template is in place, we were informed by the Interim Strategy and Programme Director that this is not completed consistently across TfN. As such, we identified that there is not a consistent process across TfN with regards to reflecting back on a project to assess whether the deliverables and intended benefits were achieved, identifying learnings or sharing. Furthermore there is no process with regards to sharing of learnings across project teams. No lessons learnt exercises had been completed for the four projects in our sample,

however we are mindful that at the time of our review, the projects were not complete.

An operating report is produced on a quarterly basis and presented to the Audit and Governance Committee. The report provides an update on key activities and risk updates in relation to projects and provides Audit and Governance Committee with assurance that projects are being managed effectively. Through review of the report presented to Audit and Governance Committee on 18 November 2022 we confirmed that it includes updates in relation to individual projects, including the four projects in our sample.

We identified that further reports and updates are provided to other various groups and committees across TfN including (but not limited to) TfN Board, Strategic Oversight Group (SOG) and the Scrutiny Committee. For example, we obtained reports in relation to the NPIER project which were presented to the aforementioned committees and confirmed by review that the information included was consistent across all forums.



2. DETAILED FINDINGS AND ACTIONS

This report has been prepared by exception. Therefore, we have included in this section, only those areas of weakness in control or examples of lapses in control identified from our testing and not the outcome of all internal audit testing undertaken.

Policy Development Framework				
Control	TfN has in place an overarching Policy Development Framework (PDF) which was developed as a result of a recommendation by an external consultant. The Framework outlines a consistent approach to policy and research projects across TfN teams. The PDF was presented to the Operating Board and approved.	Assessment:		
		Design		Partial
		Compliance		Partial
Findings / Implications	<p>In order to encourage greater communication across teams and disciplines, improve information flow and increase awareness of work being undertaken, the external consultants recommended that TfN establish an overarching way of working on strategy or policy associated projects. As a result of this recommendation, the Policy Development Framework (PDF) was produced in 2021.</p> <p>We obtained a copy of the PDF and through review, noted that it outlines a two-step process in relation to the development of projects. The steps are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sift the potential projects; and 2. Develop projects for delivery through a Project Initiation Document (PID). <p>However, we were informed by the Interim Strategy and Programme Director that despite its development, the framework has not been formally rolled out across TfN or integrated into business planning as was originally intended due to the PMO being disbanded and funding reduced. Whilst it has not been formally rolled out, the two-stage process has been used and applied to many strategy related projects over the past 12 months.</p> <p>Through our discussions with the four Project Managers as part of this review, we identified that all were aware of the PDF and the processes outlined within. We noted that the PDF states that its purpose is to provide a consistent framework for teams to work through, which will allow them to demonstrate their decision making through a consistent decision-making process and through consistent documentation. However, if the framework is not formally rolled out and mandatory, it will not achieve this purpose of ensuring consistency as teams can follow different approaches with no accountability or repercussions for not adhering to the PDF. As such, in line with good project management practices, management should formally implement the PDF and ensure the two step initiation process is followed. In addition, prior to rolling out the PDF, management should update the document to include a definition of what is considered to be a 'project' to clearly outline to the different Business Units when the framework should be used.</p>			
Management Action 1	Management will review and update the Policy Development Framework (PDF) to include a definition of what is considered to be a project (based on size, spend and scope).	Responsible Owner:	Date:	Priority:
		Katie Day, Director of Strategy, Analysis and Communications	31 December 2023	Low

Policy Development Framework

Once updated, the PDF will be formally rolled-out and implemented to ensure that the two-step process in relation to development of projects is followed consistently and the supporting documentation completed.

Management Comment *Management have agreed to form a task and finish group from within the Senior Management Team to take forward the work on the project management framework, recognising the new operating model.*

Project Initiation Documents (PIDs)

Control	<p>Where a potential project is identified by Business Units, a PID is completed outlining the rationale, SMART objectives, approach and monitoring.</p> <p>The PID also outlines the links between individual projects and the Strategic Transport Plan and 'golden thread' links with TfN's Business Plan.</p>	<p>Assessment:</p> <p>Design Partial</p> <p>Compliance Partial</p>
Findings / Implications	<p>We confirmed through review of the template that the PID is designed to assist teams to clearly define the project rationale, objective, and approach. The template is available on the intranet, and we confirmed this to be the case through review of a screenshot.</p> <p>The Interim Strategy and Programme Director highlighted that the PID process is encouraged, however it is not mandated and therefore not all projects follow this process. We confirmed that the PID template was completed in two out of the four projects in our sample.</p> <p>In addition, we were informed by management that there is no defined process in place as to where PIDs are required to be presented for consideration and approval. Historically, PIDs were sent to the Project Management Office (PMO) who used the information to update the interdependencies tracker. However, since the PMO was removed from the structure, as a general rule, PIDs have been presented to the Interim Strategy and Programme Director for oversight, however no formal approval is provided.</p> <p>A solid start to a project is key, no matter the size or scope. Completion of a PID helps guide the team early on by clearly defining the objectives, deliverables and success criteria and provides a resource which can be referred to in the future. In addition, the PID is a useful tool where there are staffing changes during a project, as it provides all the key information in one document. As such, as outlined above within control one, completion of a PID should be a mandatory element which is completed for all projects. See management action 1 above.</p> <p>Furthermore, through discussions with those involved in the projects in our sample we identified that at present it is not clear what the purpose of the PID is, and how this informs projects and project management. For example, we identified that there is no defined process in place with regards to what is done with completed PIDs and whether they require approval, as such we were unable to confirm whether PIDs are considered as part of the approval process for projects. At present a risk exists that projects are approved without clearly defining the purpose, objectives, deliverables, and strategic fit to TfN's overarching business plan. As such, management should include presentation and approval of the PID as part of the project approval process. Furthermore, where PIDs have been approved it provides an added layer of accountability for the project team to ensure they are delivering on the objectives, performance indicators and deliverables detailed within the PID. Getting the commercial planning and governance right at an early stage is important to achieving eventual project success. The ability to influence the project outcome diminishes as the project progresses. At the same time, the cost of change and rectification dramatically increases with time. Therefore, the quality of decision making at the outset is crucial to the eventual outcome and success of the project.</p>	
Management Action 2	<p>Project Initiation Documents (PIDs) will be presented and approved as part of the project approval processes in line with the approval limits within the Scheme of Delegation and by an individual with assigned responsibility. Completed PIDs will be</p>	<p>Responsible Owner: Katie Day, Director of Strategy, Analysis and Communications</p> <p>Date: 31 December 2023</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p>

Project Initiation Documents (PIDs)

retained centrally within a shared drive to ensure they can be shared in case of a change in the project team.

Management Comment *Management have agreed to form a task and finish group from within the Senior Management Team to take forward the work on the project management framework, recognising the new operating model.*

Roles and Responsibilities

Control	Projects within TfN are managed by different teams or functions and the roles and responsibilities are assigned in accordance with the Responsible, Accountable, Supportive, Consulted, and Informed (RASCI) matrix.	Assessment: Design ✓ Compliance ×
Findings / Implications	<p>Through discussions with the Interim Strategy and Programme Director we were informed that Business Units are encouraged to be clear on and assign roles and responsibilities for a project and the PDF includes reference to a RASCI matrix which the Project Teams may adopt. The RASCI matrix is used to help identify all the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder on a project. It clearly defines who is working on a specific subtask of a project. Following the RASCI matrix is an area of good practice we have identified across our client base. It stands for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible (i.e. project owner); • Accountable; • Supportive; • Consulted; and • Informed. <p>However, we were informed by management that it is not mandatory to assign roles and responsibilities using the matrix and in practice, teams may do this in a variety of ways to best suit the size and scope of the project. We confirmed that the RASCI matrix was used to assign roles and responsibilities for three of the four projects, of which two had an in-depth RASCI matrix spreadsheet defining all internal and external stakeholders and their roles. The other project (International Connectivity) where the RASCI matrix was used, has only given consideration to the internal stakeholders, and identified one individual for each of the roles defined by the matrix. Through discussions with the International Connectivity Project Manager we confirmed that there are various external stakeholders with a shared interest in the project who require consulting and kept informed. In the final project, roles and responsibilities had not been assigned at the time of our review as the project was in its infancy. In order to ensure that roles and responsibilities are defined and assigned consistently, management should ensure that the full RASCI exercise is completed for all projects and where external stakeholders are involved these should be included.</p>	
Management Action 3	Management will ensure that the full Responsible, Accountable, Supportive, Consulted, and Informed (RASCI) matrix exercise is completed for all projects, giving consideration to both internal and external stakeholders.	Responsible Owner: Katie Day, Director of Strategy, Analysis and Communications Date: 31 December 2023 Priority: Low
Management Comment	<i>Management have agreed to form a task and finish group from within the Senior Management Team to take forward the work on the project management framework, recognising the new operating model.</i>	

Project Management

Control	TfN follows an agile approach in relation to the management and control of projects undertaken by Business Units and in relation to engagement with stakeholders.	Assessment:		
		Design		Partial
		Compliance		N/A
Findings / Implications	Through review of the supporting evidence provided for the four projects, and through our discussions with the Project Managers we identified that there is a range of monitoring mechanisms used between different projects. Whilst we appreciate that projects undertaken across TfN vary widely in terms of subject matter, scope, cost and size and therefore flexibility is needed, in line with good practice there should be some elements of standardisation. For example, a project plan and timeline and standard templates provided to staff in order to ensure there are some elements of consistency in line with TfN policy and good practice principles. In order to ensure there is a consistent foundation across all projects, management should identify some key elements of project management which should be completed by all project teams as a standard. Templates will be issued for these elements to ensure teams follow a consistent approach. However, Project Managers should still be allowed some flexibility as currently encouraged and promoted by the organisation.			
Management Action 4	Management will review project management best practices and identify monitoring mechanisms which will be used consistently across projects. Once finalised templates will be developed and distributed to ensure consistency.	Responsible Owner:	Date:	Priority:
		Katie Day, Director of Strategy, Analysis and Communications	31 December 2023	Low
Management Comment	<i>Management have agreed to form a task and finish group from within the Senior Management Team to take forward the work on the project management framework, recognising the new operating model.</i>			

Lessons Learnt

Control	A standard lessons learnt template is in place for project teams to complete following the implementation of a project.	Assessment:			
		Design ✓			
		Compliance ×			
Findings / Implications	<p>Through review of the PDF, we noted that it includes details regarding a lessons learnt process and outlines that a standard template is available. We were informed by the Interim Strategy and Programme Director that this process has been trialled however it has not been rolled out formally. Furthermore, the impact of this had not been assessed internally. We obtained the lessons learnt template and through review identified that it requires lessons learnt to be identified with actions to be taken to ensure improvements are made in the future. Furthermore the actions require implementation dates to be defined and action owners outlined. The template also includes a section for more broad reflections on aspects that went well which were planned and unplanned and any unsuccessful elements. In line with good practice, the lessons learnt exercise should also consider whether the deliverables and benefits included within the PID have been realised and where they have not the project team should reflect upon the reasons behind this.</p> <p>The lessons learnt process had not been completed for any of the projects in our sample, however this was due to the projects still being in delivery phase and not yet reaching the point of reflection. We obtained an example of a completed lessons learnt template in relation to Integrated Rail Plan Scoping and confirmed by review that the template is complete, and actions identified.</p> <p>Overall, through our discussions with the Project Managers, the Interim Strategy and Programme Director and through our testing, we identified that at present, gaps in compliance exist with the control framework in relation to post-project reflections and completion of lessons learnt exercises. As a matter of good practice, lessons learnt exercises should be completed as standard by Project Managers and other relevant individuals assigned this responsibility, to ensure that continual improvements can be made.</p> <p>Furthermore, we identified that at present there are no mechanisms in place with regards to sharing lessons learnt across the organisation. As such, in line with good practice lessons learnt reports should be saved within a shared drive (given that the PMO does not exist now) which all project managers have access to, and thus enable organisational learnings to be shared.</p>				
Management Action 5	Management will update the lessons learnt template to include a section in relation to benefits realisation. The completion of the lessons learnt template will then be made mandatory for Project Managers (or equivalent individual assigned responsibility) for all projects. This will include the identification of actions for improvement with action owners and intended implementation dates. Completed templates will be saved within an action log or a shared drive to enable Project Managers from across the organisation to benefit from the learnings.	<table border="0"> <tr> <td data-bbox="1142 1053 1635 1165">Responsible Owner: Katie Day, Director of Strategy, Analysis and Communications</td> <td data-bbox="1635 1053 1859 1165">Date: 31 December 2023</td> <td data-bbox="1859 1053 1991 1165">Priority: Medium</td> </tr> </table>	Responsible Owner: Katie Day, Director of Strategy, Analysis and Communications	Date: 31 December 2023	Priority: Medium
Responsible Owner: Katie Day, Director of Strategy, Analysis and Communications	Date: 31 December 2023	Priority: Medium			

Lessons Learnt

Management Action 6	Once completed, lessons learnt reports will be presented to a delegated relevant committee / forum for oversight and to monitor actions through to completion.	Responsible Owner: Katie Day, Director of Strategy, Analysis and Communications	Date: 31 December 2023	Priority: Low
Management Comment	<i>Management have agreed to form a task and finish group from within the Senior Management Team to take forward the work on the project management framework, recognising the new operating model.</i>			

Project Tracker

Control	All current projects are recorded within the 'Interdependencies Tracker' which outlines key milestones and interdependencies between projects.	Assessment: Design ✓ Compliance ×
Findings / Implications	<p>Through discussions with the Interim Strategy and Programme Director we were informed that the 'Interdependencies Tracker' was previously maintained by the PMO. We were informed that in the past when PIDs were completed, they were sent to the PMO where individuals updated the Interdependencies Tracker with information from the PIDs. Responsibility to update the spreadsheet sat with members of the PMO. However, we were informed that since the removal of the PMO the spreadsheet has not been updated on a regular basis. We confirmed through review of the last updated dates that the spreadsheet is not up to date.</p> <p>We were informed by the Interim Strategy and Programme Director that the spreadsheet was developed and implemented at a time where TfN had a number of large projects with various interdependencies and as such it was a beneficial tool at the time. However, TfN has since completed the large projects and the current projects are of a smaller scale and there are not as many critical interdependencies and as such the Interim Strategy and Programme Director outlined that it was identified internally that it was no longer necessary to update the tracker. . Furthermore, the decision as to whether to retain the spreadsheet will depend upon the funding received from the Department for Transport (DfT) and the projects pursued going forward.</p> <p>However, whilst we appreciate that the central PMO is no longer in place, as a matter of good practice management should ensure that project managers are updating the tracker on a regular basis and ensure that all projects undertaken by TfN are included to provide oversight of activities at a central level. Furthermore, through our discussions with the Project Managers, one informed us that they consider the tracker to have been a useful tool as it enables project teams to assess the drivers, efficiencies, similarities, and differences between projects.</p>	
Management Action 7	Through discussions with Project Managers, Management will consider the value of the Interdependencies Tracker and identify based on the outcomes of discussions and the funding received from the DfT whether it will be maintained and kept up to date.	Responsible Owner: Katie Day, Director of Strategy, Analysis and Communications Date: 31 December 2023 Priority: Low
Management Comment	<i>Management have agreed to form a task and finish group from within the Senior Management Team to take forward the work on the project management framework, recognising the new operating model.</i>	

APPENDIX A: CATEGORISATION OF FINDINGS

Categorisation of internal audit findings

Priority	Definition
Low	There is scope for enhancing control or improving efficiency and quality.
Medium	Timely management attention is necessary. This is an internal control risk management issue that could lead to: Financial losses which could affect the effective function of a department, loss of controls or process being audited or possible reputational damage, negative publicity in local or regional media.
High	Immediate management attention is necessary. This is a serious internal control or risk management issue that may lead to: Substantial losses, violation of corporate strategies, policies or values, reputational damage, negative publicity in national or international media or adverse regulatory impact, such as loss of operating licences or material fines.

The following table highlights the number and categories of management actions made as a result of this audit.

Risks	Control design not effective*		Non Compliance with controls*		Agreed actions		
					Low	Medium	High
TCR03: TfN's Strategic Transport Plan (STP)	3	(10)	3	(10)	5	2	0
TCR04: Delivery of robust and compelling evidence to support Investment Programmes							
Total					5	2	0

* Shows the number of controls not adequately designed or not complied with. The number in brackets represents the total number of controls reviewed in this area.

APPENDIX B: BENCHMARKING

We have included some comparative data to benchmark the number of management actions agreed in this audit compared to similar audits conducted across the sector, as shown in the tables below. Additionally, the tables illustrate the levels of assurance issued as a result of a number of similar audits undertaken across the sector. It should be noted that the assurance opinions and management actions raised within all our audits reflect the scopes agreed with management at the time of the audits.

Level of assurance	Percentage of reviews	Results of the audit
Substantial assurance	33.33%	
Reasonable assurance	47.22%	✓
Partial assurance	19.45%	
No assurance	0%	

Management actions	Average number in similar audits	Number in this audit
High	0.15	0
Medium	2.64	2
Low	1.74	5
Total	4.53	7

Our benchmarking data above shows that the level of assurance achieved by TfN is in line the sector average. In addition to this, the total number of management actions in this review is higher than the average number raised in this area across our clients.

APPENDIX C: SCOPE

Scope of the review

The scope was planned to provide assurance on the controls and mitigations in place relating to the following risks:

Objective of the area under review	Risks relevant to the scope of the review	Risk source
We will provide assurance that the governance arrangements around project approval and implementation relating to TfN projects have been appropriately followed by individual Business Units.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TCR03: TfN's Strategic Transport Plan (STP) TCR04: Delivery of robust and compelling evidence to support Investment Programmes 	Corporate Risk Register

When planning the audit, the following areas for consideration and limitations were agreed:

- TfN's Strategic Transport Plan and the 'golden thread' links with individual projects;
- Policies and procedures are in place outlining decision making processes to be followed for strategic and policy driven projects across any of TfN's programmes;
- Roles and responsibilities have been assigned for the projects including co-ordination and oversight at a strategic level;
- We will look to review a sample of current projects from different TfN business areas and test to determine how:
 - Define the rationale/business decision and criterion for the chosen project including the corresponding documentation and approval to go ahead with the proposed project;
 - Determine that the benefits are defined for each project and how these will be realistically measured;
 - Review how projects are developed to assess how the impact on quality has been considered in delivering such projects;
 - Review the framework to undertake ongoing monitoring of key milestones including any key performance indicators and evidence of actions taken where slippage is identified including escalation processes;
 - Review of the governance structure for reporting against the delivery of the projects; and
 - Review the proposed framework for the ongoing reviews of the implementation/ success of the project.
- As part of the audit, we will compare and contrast the approaches applied for a sample of projects to ensure that the key principles and considerations have been applied for each projects. We acknowledge that the size and scale of each project will vary. As part of this analysis, we will consider whether TfN requires a more standardised approach i.e. Policy Development Framework Policy Development Framework across the organisation.
- Project risks have been identified and are appropriately monitored;
- Engagement with key stakeholders for projects;
- The interdependencies of TfN projects and how this is effectively managed;

- How lessons learned and benefits realisation are identified, monitored, and reported on;
- Governance and reporting arrangements over projects;
- Reporting to Leadership Team and the Board is undertaken on a regular basis.

Limitations to the scope of the audit assignment:

- We will not confirm that projects are delivered on budget or within agreed timescales;
- We will not review the initiation document for adequacy;
- We will not comment on the appropriateness or accuracy of projected costs;
- We will not comment on the outcome of the projects or that correct decisions were made throughout the course of the project life;
- We will not confirm on whether all lessons learned as a result of the project have been identified;
- The scope of the work will be limited to those areas examined in the context of the objectives set out for this review. It should not, therefore, be considered as a comprehensive review of all aspects of non-compliance that may exist now or in the future;
- We will not comment on whether value for money has been achieved from the projects considered as part of this review;
- Whilst we will consider the risk management arrangements and reporting specific to the projects included as part of this review, we will not comment on whether all risks have been identified and managed correctly;
- We will not comment on the appropriateness of the project plan, only whether the plan has been monitored and progress reported;
- We do not endorse any particular project management approach or methodology;
- The results of our work are reliant on the quality and completeness of the information provided to us;
- We will not comment on whether all stakeholders have been identified and engaged with;
- We will not validate any assumptions within the individual projects; and
- Our work does not provide absolute assurance that material errors, loss or fraud do not exist.

Debrief held 27 January 2023
Draft report issued 3 February 2023
Responses received 8 June 2023

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