



Department  
for Education



Infrastructure  
and Projects  
Authority

**Date: 11 May 2023**

**To:** Jane Balderstone, Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the School Rebuilding Programme (SRP)

**From:** Susan Acland-Hood, Permanent Secretary  
Nick Smallwood, Chief Executive, IPA

**Subject: Appointment as SRO for the SRP**

We are writing to confirm your appointment as SRO of the SRP with effect from April 2023, directly accountable to your Permanent Secretary under the oversight of the Secretary of State for Education.

This role will require at least 40% of your time each month. This will be periodically reviewed to ensure that an appropriate balance is maintained across your portfolio of responsibilities.

As SRO you have personal responsibility for delivery of the SRP and will be held accountable for the delivery of its objectives and policy intent; for securing and protecting its vision, for ensuring that it is governed responsibly, reported honestly, escalated appropriately and for influencing constructively the context, culture, and operating environment of the project.

Like all civil servants, you remain accountable to Ministers, as set out in the Civil Service Code, and should deliver the programme in accordance with the objectives and policy intent as set by Ministers.

In addition to your internal accountabilities, SROs are personally accountable to Parliamentary Select Committees. You will be expected to account for and explain the decisions and actions you have taken to deliver the programme (or specific milestones). In your case, this means that from the date of signature of this letter you will be held personally accountable and could be called by Select Committees to account for delivery of the School Rebuilding Programme.

More information on this is set out in [Giving Evidence to Select Committees – Guidance for Civil Servants](#), sometimes known as the Osmotherly Rules. Detailed SRO roles and responsibilities are set out in the IPA's guidance on [the role of the Senior Responsible Owner](#). It is important to be clear that your accountability to Parliament relates only to implementation, within the terms agreed in this letter. It will remain for the Minister to account for the relevant policy decisions and development.

## Tenure of position

As this programme is scheduled to run until 2032, you are required to undertake this role until SRP reaches an agreed milestone appropriate for handover. Progress will be reflected in your personal objectives.

## Objectives and Performance Criteria

The policy intent supported by this programme is to improve the condition of the school estate. Proposed changes to the programme scope which impact on this intent or benefits realisation must be authorised by the Director General Operations Group and may be subject to further levels of approval.

The programme was announced in June 2020 by the Prime Minister with funding confirmed in the November 2020 spending review (SR). The main objectives of the ten-year SRP are as follows:

- Replacing poor condition and ageing school buildings with modern, energy efficient designs.
- A commitment to deliver 50 new building projects a year, totalling 500 projects over the next ten years.
- An expectation that the first projects will start on site from September 2021.

As SRO, you are expected to run this programme in accordance with the [Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery](#). Further detail on your role and responsibilities as SRO are set out [in IPA guidance on the role of the senior responsible owner](#), and you are expected to follow that guidance, and other IPA guidance on the management of major projects

## Extent and limit of accountability

### (2) Finance and Controls

HMT spending controls will apply on the basis set out within your department's delegated authority letter. Where the SRP exceeds the delegated authority set by HMT, the Treasury Approval Point process will apply, and the details of each approval process must be agreed with your HMT spending team. You should consult departmental finance colleagues on how to go about this.

You should also note that where expenditure is considered novel, contentious, repercussive, or likely to result in costs to other parts of the public sector, HMT approval will be required, regardless of whether the programme expenditure exceeds the delegated authority set by HMT. If in doubt about whether approval is required you should, in the first instance, consult departmental finance colleagues before raising with the relevant HMT spending team.

The overall budget for the programme has been agreed through the treasury approval process and the Accounting Officer delegation letter which sets out that you have decision making for schools' capital up to the agreed limit. For direct delivery schools' capital programmes, this delegation allows you to progress proposals which exceed the limits, to HM Treasury. Current

admin resource will transition to SRP from PSBP as PSBP programmes reach their natural end.

The approved expenditure is conditional on the actions agreed in the treasury approval process.

You should operate at all times within the rules set out in [Managing Public Money](#). In addition, you must be mindful of, and act in accordance with, the specific Treasury delegated limits and Cabinet Office controls relevant to the SRP. Information on these controls can be found here: [Cabinet Office controls](#).

## (2) Delegated departmental/project authority

- you are authorised to approve expenditure that has gained HMT approval.
- you are authorised to agree project rescheduling within the programme end date but rescheduling beyond that must be agreed with the Schools Capital Board.
- you are also responsible for recommending to Director General, Operations Group, and the SRP Board the need to either pause or terminate the programme where necessary and in a timely manner.

Where issues arise which, you are unable to resolve, you are responsible for escalating these issues to the Director General, Operations Group, and the Schools Capital Board.

## **Project Status**

The Project Status at the date of your appointment is reflected in the most recent quarterly return on the programme to the Infrastructure and Projects Authority. This is the agreed position as you assume formal ownership of the programme.

## **Major Projects Leadership Academy (MPLA)**

As SRO of a GMPP project, you will be required to enrol on or have completed the MPLA or similar qualification. You will be contacted shortly by a member of the IPA Leadership and Capabilities team to discuss this.

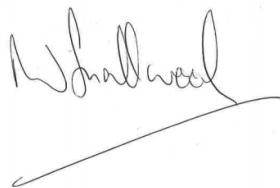
To widen experience and understanding of the role, SROs are expected to become accredited Major Project reviewers and to lead or participate in such reviews for other Government departments, the wider public sector, or other areas of the Department for Education as appropriate. You will be required to participate in such reviews at least once every 12 months to maintain your accreditation.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you success in your role as SRO.

Yours sincerely,



Susan Acland-Hood  
Permanent Secretary  
Department for Education



Nick Smallwood  
Chief Executive Officer  
Infrastructure and Projects Authority

## CONFIRMATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF APPOINTMENT

I confirm that I accept the appointment as Senior Responsible Officer for the SRP, including my personal accountability for implementation of the project, as set out in the letter above.

Name of SRO: Jane Balderstone  
Director, Capital Delivery

Signature of SRO:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Balderstone', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Date: 11 May 2023