



Department
for Education



Infrastructure
and Projects
Authority

Rory Kennedy
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

20 December 2019

Dear Rory,

Appointment as SRO for the Priority School Building Programme 2

This letter confirms your appointment as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the Priority School Building Programme 2. It sets out your responsibilities, and the support you have the right to expect from the department.

The appointment is made with effect from 1 January 2019. In this role, you are directly accountable to your Director General (DG) with oversight from the Permanent Secretary and the Secretary of State for Education.

Thank you for taking on this important role – you have my full support in executing your responsibilities and in drawing on the support and resources of the department as set out in this letter.

You should be aware that SROs of projects on the Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP) will now be held personally accountable to, and could be called to attend 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).

It is important to be clear that your accountability relates only to implementation: it will remain for the Minister to account for the relevant policy decisions and development.

Guidance on “Giving Evidence to Select Committees – Guidance for Civil Servants” is available online and can be accessed [here](#) and Infrastructure & Projects Authority (IPA) guidance on management of major projects is available [here](#).

A signed copy of this letter will be published on the DfE website. This is a requirement of all projects that are part of the GMPP.

Summary of responsibilities

As SRO you have personal accountability for delivery of the Priority School Building Programme 2. You are responsible for:

- setting the long-term vision for the programme;
- the delivery of agreed objectives and policy intent over the lifetime of the programme;

- putting in place effective management for the programme to ensure work is appropriately defined, planned, monitored and controlled, and quality managed to maximise success;
- ensuring that a business case is developed and updated throughout the programme lifecycle;
- identifying and securing the necessary investment and approvals for the programme internally and externally, for example HM Treasury (HMT) clearance and Cabinet Office (CO) controls;
- managing the resources allocated to the programme;
- realising the benefits of the programme as outlined in the agreed business case;
- putting in place effective governance for the programme;
- understanding how risk is managed within the department (the risk management framework, which can be found on the [intranet](#), sets this out), setting up and embedding processes to identify and escalate risks and issues in your area, and actively managing risks where you are the owner; and
- influencing the context, culture and operating environment of the programme so as to maximise its chances of success.

As SRO you will be responsible for delivering the Priority School Building Programme 2 to the scheduled full term, currently forecasted as February 2026.

Executing your SRO role

SROs are generally expected to remain in position for the lifetime of a major programme, to see it through to its successful conclusion. You should make sure that you have appropriate knowledge management arrangements in place and could manage an orderly handover to a new SRO if required.

This will be a part time role which requires approximately 20% of your time per month.

Before signing this letter, you should have established in discussion with your DG how managing your SRO responsibilities is going to be feasible alongside your other responsibilities. You will be expected to carry out this role alongside your other responsibilities, and are responsible for making sure that you allocate sufficient time to the effective delivery of your SRO role and responsibilities.

If you find that you are not able to allocate sufficient time and attention to your role, you should escalate the issue to your DG in the first instance, and in doing that you have the right to expect the issue to be resolved satisfactorily. If that is not possible, you should escalate, and have the right to require resolution of the issue through the organisation's formal governance structures.

Support for you in your role

I am fully committed to making sure that DfE SROs have access to the corporate services, support and resources they need to execute their responsibilities. As SRO of a major programme, I will invite you to a quarterly meeting with all the major project SROs where we can discuss common concerns and issues.

Your DG is your senior sponsor for this programme. In that role you can expect them to offer you support, advice and oversight on my behalf. This should include help with escalating unresolved risks and issues to the Performance and Risk Committee (or where necessary, the Leadership Team), dealing with strategic blockers to delivery, and supporting you in obtaining the resources and support you need to execute your SRO responsibilities.

As part of the major projects portfolio, you will have access to:

- support and expert advice from DfE's corporate functions including finance, legal, commercial, transformation, digital, project delivery and analysis. Where the requirement is significant, you should request the nomination of a named, accountable individual who will provide the required services and support.
- help to bring in essential external expert support and services if the organisation is not able to meet the need internally.
- support from your Portfolio Lead in the Major Projects Directorate.
- a growing network of delivery and programme specialists to act as contacts, mentors or sources of assurance at critical stages of the programme.
- the [Project Delivery Capability Framework](#) which describes the job roles, capabilities and learning for all Government Project Delivery Professionals across government.
- the right to be involved in decisions in the department that may affect your ability to deliver.

Objectives and Performance Criteria

The long-term policy intent of this programme is to address the condition of the worst school buildings in the country. The objectives and vision of the project are:

- To rebuild or refurbish qualifying buildings in each of the 277 schools in the programme between 2015 and 2021.
- To build more for less.
- To use the most appropriate procurement model for each school in order to drive efficiencies in procurement and ensure that a quality solution is obtained at the lowest cost.

The Programme benefits realisation plan has been scheduled to run up to the Business Case end date which currently stands at March 2076, when we expect all benefits to be fully realised.

The benefits outlined for PSBP2 have broadly followed the same principles applied to Phase 1 of PSBP. They can be grouped into three core drivers:

- **Social Benefits** - Every child should have a place in a safe and well-maintained school.
- **Economic Regeneration** - Making changes to the way we invest and distribute capital funding (money for school buildings and equipment) to make sure that there are enough school places where they are needed.

- **Efficiency Savings** - The maintenance and improvement of school buildings is effective and efficient.

Governance in the programme is dynamic – it is continually reviewed to ensure that the structure is relevant and provides quality, timely information to enable the most effective decision making possible. The main board is the Schools Capital Board.

Proposed changes to the programme's scope which would affect the policy intent or benefits realisation must be authorised by your DG.

The objectives and vision of the programme should be regularly reviewed and also agreed with your DG.

Financial, Commercial and Project Delivery authority

Your financial and commercial delegated authority are set out separately from this letter, in your budget delegation letter. You may have been delegated financial and commercial authority and thereby have authority to approve expenditure in accordance with the published scheme of delegation. You are responsible for seeking authority from relevant budget holders for spend on this project, where it is in excess of your own delegated financial authority. The original budget for Priority School Building Programme 2 is £2.4bn.

You are also responsible for recommending to your DG and the Schools Capital Board the need to either pause or terminate the programme where necessary and in a timely manner.

You should operate at all times within the rules set out in [Managing Public Money](#). HMT spending controls including any [CO spending controls](#) will apply on the basis set out within the [department's delegated authority letter](#). Where the programme exceeds the departmental delegated authority limits set by HMT and/or regardless of the value if it is novel, contentious, repercussive or likely to result in costs to other parts of the public sector, the Treasury Approval Point process will apply.

All cases that need Accounting Officer and HMT formal approval will first be referred to your finance business partner for initial advice who in turn will involve Financial Strategy Unit (FSU)/or the Financial Governance Team (FGC) for final consideration and clearance and including liaison and clearing approval with HMT spending team.

Where issues arise which you are unable to resolve, you are responsible for escalating these issues to your DG and the Schools Capital Board. When you do that, you have the right to expect the issue to be resolved satisfactorily. If not you should continue escalating it through the organisation's governance structures until you are satisfied it has been resolved.

Governance

The department's [governance structure](#) is there to support you if you have a risk, delivery or performance issue that cannot be managed within your directorate, or that would benefit from further assurance.

The project detailed in this letter is part of the DfE major projects portfolio and will have oversight from the Performance & Risk Committee (PRC). PRC is responsible, on behalf of the Leadership Team, for regular oversight of the department's top tier risks and major projects and programmes.

Your Portfolio Lead James Fitzsimmons can advise and support you in working with the appropriate committees including specialist advice from the risk team on escalating risks to the department's top tier risk register. When you do that, you have the right to expect a joint conversation about how the organisation can support you to reduce or mitigate the escalated risk.

Assurance

You will be required to undertake internal and external assurance reviews which are an essential part of successful project delivery. The reviews are often required for formal HMT approvals or business case approval points and they also provide support and constructive challenge to SROs. Further advice and support on assuring your project is available through your Portfolio Lead.

You are responsible for making sure that you are appropriately skilled and able to execute the functions outlined in this letter. If you need additional support or training, please contact your Portfolio Lead in the first instance.

Major Projects Leadership Academy (MPLA)

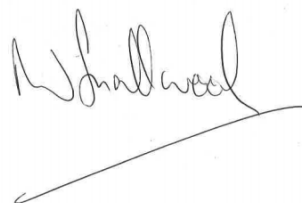
Your DG sponsor is an MPLA graduate and, where necessary, will provide you with mentoring.

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

Yours sincerely



Jonathan Slater
Permanent Secretary
Department for Education



Nick Smallwood
Chief Executive
Infrastructure & Projects Authority

I confirm that I accept the appointment including my personal accountability for implementation of the Priority School Building Programme 2 as detailed in the letter above.

Rory Kennedy

Signature of SRO

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rory Kennedy', written in a cursive style.

Date: 6/01/2020