



Karina Singh
Senior Responsible Owner
Local Land Charges Programme
HM Land Registry Head Office
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By email: Karina.Singh@landregistry.gov.uk

18 August 2020

Dear Karina

APPOINTMENT AS SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OWNER (SRO) FOR THE LOCAL LAND CHARGES PROGRAMME

This letter formalises your appointment as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) of the Local Land Charges (LLC) Programme. This project sits on the Government Major Project Portfolio (GMPP). These responsibilities form part of your role as Director for Transformation for HM Land Registry (HMLR) for which you are accountable to me as Accounting Officer. The work of the project is overseen by HMLR's Executive Board and its supporting sub-committees. Your role as SRO will be reflected in the objectives you agree with me.

This will be a part time role which requires, on average, 50% of your time over the course of each year. As SRO you have personal responsibility for delivery of the LLC Programme 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.

You are accountable for ensuring that the LLC Programme is governed in line with the HMLR governance framework. The principles set out in the revised Osmotherly Guidance, published in October 2014 will also apply from the date of this letter. That includes the requirement to publish this letter on gov.uk.

The revised Osmotherly Guidance establishes that SROs for major projects will be directly accountable to Parliament for the implementation of the project. You will be expected to account for and explain the decisions and actions you have taken to deliver the project for which you have personal responsibility, against the business case, within the context of HMLR's corporate objectives and as a member of HMLR's Executive Board. It will remain for the responsible Minister to account for relevant policy decisions and development, including as they impact materially on the business case, though the guidance makes clear that as SRO you are expected to be able to explain such decisions.

A description of generic SRO roles and responsibilities is attached at Annex A and you are expected to follow the principles it sets out. You will also want to familiarise yourself with the guidance "Giving Evidence to Select Committees – Guidance for Civil Servants" and with the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) guidance on management of major projects: (<https://www.gov.uk/government/policy-teams/major-projects-authority>). This includes the [Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery](#) to which the project should adhere and utilise.

Your accountability to Parliament sits alongside your accountabilities under the Civil Service Code, your role in supporting me as the Accounting Officer, and your role on HM Land Registry's Executive Board.

Tenure of position

You are expected to remain in post until 2026/7 which aligns with the anticipated completion of the LLC Programme or, by agreement, until delivery of a specific milestone, end of phase or gate is achieved.

Your tenure in this post will be regularly reviewed with me, taking into account the benefits of continuity, the capability needed to lead this project through its development, planning, delivery and evaluation phases; the length of these phases, your development as a member of the project delivery profession within the Civil Service, and HMLR's ability to deploy its senior leadership team appropriately. You should ensure that you have agreed with me appropriate succession planning for key personnel in the project.

Objectives and Performance Criteria

The policy intent delivered by this Programme is to deliver a national digital service for Local Land Charges in England and Wales, by migrating the majority of local authority records to the new service, in order to provide a consistent service for customers by standardising search formats, prices and turnaround times.

In order to achieve this, the SRO will ensure:

- appropriate funding is secured, to accomplish the policy intent;
- that key risks are managed and mitigated, escalating blockers as appropriate;
- relevant capacity and capability are built and maintained to run the new service and migrate local authority data, meeting the robust data quality standards;
- commitment is gained from local authorities and key stakeholders, and the team works collaboratively with them to ensure the ongoing future success of the service; and
- the new transformed service is aligned to the HMLR Strategy and wider government agendas to deliver ongoing benefits including instant access to LLC information, a consistent and digital first customer experience and unlocking wider economic benefits by making the data available to support the property market.

Proposed changes to the project scope which impact on this intent or benefits realisation must be authorised using the project's governance framework, in conjunction with HMLR's governance framework and may be subject to further levels of approval. Further details are set out below.

Your objectives and performance criteria with respect to this project are reflected in your performance agreement form, which we agree.

Extent and limit of accountability

Finance and Controls

The overall budget for the LLC Programme is set out in your letter of Delegated Authority; this is issued to you annually by HMLR's finance team and may be updated from time to time. This letter is the means by which you are held to account for the budgets and other resources for which you are responsible.

The allocation of HMLR's resources is subject to review each year during business planning and as SRO you are expected engage actively in the business planning process. HMLR explicitly recognises that you will need to balance your responsibilities in respect of the project with your responsibilities relating to the wider work of HMLR.

HMT spending controls will apply, through the spending review and business case process and where the Project exceeds the delegated authority set by HMT, the appropriate Treasury approval process will apply. The details must be agreed with your HMT spending team. You should consult 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 project expenditure exceeds the delegated authority set by HMT. If in doubt about whether approval is required you should, in the first instance, consult your Finance Business Partner before raising with the relevant HMT spending team.

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 LLC Programme. Information on these controls can be found here: [Cabinet Office controls](#).

Delegated Departmental / project authority / reporting

You are authorised to approve expenditure in line with your delegated authority letter.

You should use your project's governance framework, in conjunction with HMLR's governance framework and the overarching Framework with BEIS as HMLR's sponsoring government department, as the means by which any necessary authorisation is sought for any changes to your project's scope, milestones or scheduling.

You should ensure any required reporting to the IPA under the GMPP is carried out responsibly and that you provide LLC performance reporting to BEIS in line with HMLR's overarching Framework.

Where issues arise which you are unable to resolve within delegated responsibilities, you are responsible for escalating these issues to me as the Accounting Officer and to the Executive Board or its supporting committees in a timely manner. This includes making any recommendation to pause or terminate the project as required.

Project Status

The Project Status at the date of your appointment is reflected in the most recent quarterly return on the project to the Infrastructure and Projects Authority. This is the agreed position as you assume formal ownership of the project. Project progress is reviewed regularly through HMLR's governance structures and arrangements - including its Executive Board and sub-committees, and the HM Land Registry Board. You should take active steps to ensure you escalate in a timely manner any significant issues that will materially affect the delivery of the project for which you are responsible as set out in the business case.

Professional Development and Support

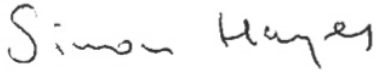
As an SRO, it is expected that you will continue your ongoing professional development, including through IPA mandated training. Your IPA team will be able to assist you in in this process.

As an MPLA graduate you are requested to become accredited Major Project reviewer and to lead or participate in such reviews for other Government departments or the wider public sector as appropriate. You will be required to participate in such reviews at least once every 12 months to maintain your accreditation. IPA can provide further information and support you in your application.

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

Please return a signed copy of this letter to me as Accounting Officer and the IPA.

Signatures



Simon Hayes, Chief Executive and
Chief Land Registrar, HM Land
Registry



Nick Smallwood, Chief Executive,
Infrastructure and Projects Authority

I confirm that I accept the details of my role, including my personal accountability for development, delivery and implementation as detailed in the letter above.

Name of SRO: Karina Singh



Signature of SRO: _____

Date: 21 August 2020

The Role of the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)

You are personally accountable for ensuring the ongoing delivery of the Local Land Charges Programme. You are responsible for securing the resources necessary for the success of the project within those available to HMLR and for ensuring that the related implementation and transition activities realise the agreed objectives and benefits. In doing so you should balance the need to support the Accounting Officer to help HMLR reach an affordable settlement which reflects the department's priorities and to deliver value for money across HMLR.

You will be personally accountable to Parliamentary Select Committees and be expected to explain the decisions and actions you have taken. This could include where a Minister has intervened to change the project during the implementation phase in a way which has implications for the cost and/or timeline of implementation. You will be able to disclose your advice about any such changes.

You must ensure the effectiveness of the governance, assurance and project management arrangements and maintain them throughout the life of the project. You should adopt best practice and be prepared to justify any deviation from it, in line with guidance published by the Cabinet Office, specifically the IPA's [Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery](#).

An SRO will:

- Be a visible, engaged and active project leader, not a figurehead;
- Deliver the agreed outcomes and benefits;
- Create an open, honest and positive culture committed to delivering at pace;
- Challenge senior officers and Ministers when appropriate and escalate quickly;
- Provide appropriate support, steer and strategic focus to the Project Director and ensure that they have a clear and current letter of appointment; and
- Have sufficient time, experience and the right skills to carry the full responsibilities of the role.

Specific SRO accountabilities:

Ensure that the project is set up for success

- Ensure that the project is set-up to make an unambiguous and demonstrable link to strategic policy;
- Translate this policy intent into clear deliverables which are established and agreed with senior stakeholders;
- Carry out a robust and commercially viable options appraisal, which balances risk with opportunity, as part of initial project feasibility;
- Establish a firm business case for the project during the initiation/definition phase and ensure that any planned change continues to be aligned with the strategic need;
- Identify and secure the necessary investment for the business case (this includes both budget and operational resource);
- Design and implement robust, appropriate and transparent project governance;
- Build strong and effective relationships with key stakeholders, justifying their trust and retaining their confidence, and obtain their commitment to benefits realisation.

Ensure that the project meets its objectives and delivers the projected benefits

- Gain agreement to the project objectives and benefits amongst stakeholders, including Ministers where appropriate;
- Understand the broader government perspective and its impact on the project;
- Ensure the strategic fit of the project objectives and benefits;

- Agree a clear and simple approach to performance management and monitor delivery of the objectives and benefits, taking appropriate action where necessary to ensure their successful delivery.

Develop the project organisation structure and plan

- Ensure that there is a coherent organisation structure and appropriately detailed project plan;
- Build the right team, securing necessary resources and skills and providing clear lines of accountability;
- Provide appropriate support, steer and strategic focus to the Project Director.

Monitor and take control of progress

- Monitor and control the progress of the project at a strategic level, being honest and frank about project progress, risks and issues; Ensure that any changes to agreed project benefits are flagged appropriately within project governance and that the business case is updated accordingly (throughout project lifecycle);
- Ensure that the integrity of the project is maintained and speak truth to power – including to Parliamentary Select Committees;
- Communicate effectively with senior stakeholders regarding project progress and provide clear, appropriate and delivery-focused decisions and advice to the Project Director.

Ensure problem resolution and referral processes are appropriate and effective

- Identify, understand and drive the successful mitigation of project risks;
- Escalate serious issues quickly and with confidence to senior management and/or Ministers;
- Develop strong and effective engagement between the project team and its stakeholders and sponsors;
- Ensure that communication processes are effective and that the project's objectives and deliverables continue to be consistent with the organisation's strategic direction.

Ensure that the project is subject to review at appropriate stages

- Recognise the value of robust project review and ensure it occurs at key points in the project lifecycle, particularly at the initiation stage;
- Make certain that any recommendations or concerns from reviews are met or addressed in a timely manner;
- In the event of a "red" or "amber-red" review or a red or amber-red quarterly GMPP review rating, ensure that the Performance and Risk and Projects and Investments Committees are made aware of the situation.

Manage formal project closure

- Formally close the project and ensure that the lessons learned are documented within the final evaluation report and disseminated to key stakeholders;
- Ensure that the post implementation review takes place and that the output is communicated to the appropriate stakeholders;
- Ensure a plan for both long term benefits realisation and on-going sustainability is agreed with key stakeholders as part of the process of moving the project to "business as usual".