



Department
for Culture
Media & Sport

From the Permanent Secretary
Department for Culture, Media and Sport
100 Parliament Street
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Infrastructure
and Projects
Authority

From the Chief Executive
Infrastructure and Projects Authority
1 Horse Guards Road
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**To: Matt Reader, Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the
Blythe House Programme**

Date: 18th October 2023

**From: Susannah Storey, Permanent Secretary, DCMS and
Nick Smallwood, Chief Executive Officer, IPA**

Appointment as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the Blythe House Programme

I am writing to confirm your appointment as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) of the Blythe House Programme with effect from the 4th September 2023, directly accountable to the Permanent Secretary of DCMS, under the oversight of the Minister of State for Arts and Heritage.

You will carry out this role alongside your other responsibilities as DCMS Deputy Director for the Transition programme and Deputy Head of Profession for Project Delivery, and must ensure that you allocate sufficient time to enable the effective delivery of the role and responsibilities, as set out in Annex 1. This will be periodically reviewed to ensure that an appropriate balance is maintained across your portfolio of activities.

We anticipate that this role will require up to 20% of your full time post to complete. This is lower than the usual 50% allocation for a number of reasons. Primarily, the programme is at a late stage of delivery, seven years into an eight year programme, with three of the constituent construction projects having reached completion and full required government funding secured through until completion. Additionally, SROs remain in place for the delivery of each of the museum's responsibilities for delivery within the programme.

As SRO you have personal responsibility for delivery of this final phase of the Blythe House 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.

In addition to your internal accountabilities, you should also be aware that SROs will now be held personally accountable to Parliamentary Select Committees. You will be expected to account for and explain the decisions and actions you have taken to deliver this final phase of 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 for delivery of this final phase of the Blythe House Programme.

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.

Detailed SRO roles and responsibilities are attached at Annex 1. You should follow the guidance in that document. You should also make sure you understand the guidance “Giving Evidence to Select Committees – Guidance for Civil Servants” at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/364600/Osmotherly_Rules_October_2014.pdf. You should also make yourself aware of the Major Projects Authority (MPA) guidance on management of major projects: (<https://www.gov.uk/government/policy-teams/major-projects-authority>).

Tenure of position

Unless otherwise agreed, you are required to undertake this role until achievement of the vacant possession and completion of the sale of Blythe House, planned for 2024. Progress towards this will be reflected in your personal objectives.

Objectives and Performance Criteria

The policy intent supported by this project is to unlock national collections that cannot readily be viewed by the general public and to care for and preserve them for future generations. Proposed changes to the project scope which impact on this intent or benefits realisation must be authorised by the Permanent Secretary of DCMS and the Blythe House Programme Board and may be subject to a further level of approval.

The objectives of the project are to preserve, protect and transform public access to the collections currently stored at Blythe House by relocating them to appropriate, world-class <https://docs.google.com/document/d/12dGxZVFOhB0fohG5tHW0DDtsPzRkA4A2RoUjj2i0-U0/edits> facilities; and to dispose of Blythe House by 2024, enabling the building to be put to a more efficient use and securing maximum return on investment.

Extent and limit of accountability

(1) Finance and Controls

HMT spending controls will apply on the basis set out within your department's delegated authority letter. Where the Blythe House Programme 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 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 consult the relevant HMT spending team.

The overall government funding for the programme is £186 million, excluding VAT and including programme team support costs, of the total programme cost of £241m (including non-gov contributions).

The deliverability of the Blythe House Programme is subject to the required resource availability. In the event of any such disruption, the deliverables, overall timeline, required funding values and profiles may all be subject to some variation.

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 HMT delegated limits and Cabinet Office controls relevant to the Blythe House Programme. Information on these controls can be found here: [Cabinet Office controls](#)

(2) Delegated departmental/project authority

- You are authorised to approve expenditure each year in accordance with the profile agreed with HM Treasury and the DCMS Finance Committee.
- You are authorised to agree project rescheduling which does not prevent the achievement of vacant possession of Blythe House by 2024, but rescheduling beyond that must be agreed with the Permanent Secretary of DCMS and the Blythe House Programme Board.
- You are also responsible for recommending to the Permanent Secretary 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 Permanent Secretary of DCMS.

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 & Projects Authority (IPA). This is the agreed position as you assume formal ownership of the programme.

Major Project Reviews (MPLA)

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 Culture, Media & Sport as appropriate. As an MPLA graduate you are required to participate in a review 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,



Permanent Secretary

Department for Culture, Media & Sport



Chief Executive Officer

Infrastructure & Projects Authority

I confirm that I accept the appointment including my personal accountability for implementation of the project as detailed in the letter above.

Name of SRO: Matt Reader



Date: 18th October 2023

The Role of the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)

You are personally accountable for ensuring the ongoing delivery of the Blythe House Programme. You are responsible for securing the resources necessary for the success of the project and for the ensuring that the related implementation and transition activities realise the agreed objectives and benefits. 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 programme. You should adopt best practice and be prepared to justify any deviation from it, in line with guidance published by the Cabinet Office relating to Major Project governance, assurance and control.

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 business;
- 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 life-cycle);
- 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 or programme 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 pre-initiation (feasibility) and initiation stages;
- 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 Permanent Secretary has been made aware of the situation and has been briefed accordingly.

Manage formal project closure

- Formally close the project or programme 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".