



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Infrastructure
and Projects
Authority

To: Emma Bourne, Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the Collections and Packaging Reforms Programme

From: Tamara Finkelstein, Permanent Secretary of Defra; and

Nick Smallwood, Chief Executive Officer of the Infrastructure and Projects Authority

26 February 2024

Dear Emma,

Appointment as senior responsible owner for the Collections and Packaging Reforms Programme

We are writing to confirm your appointment as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) of the Collections and Packaging Reforms Programme with effect from 1st April 2023. This letter sets out your responsibilities and the support you can expect from your department and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

As SRO, you are directly accountable to Sarah Homer, Director General for Portfolio Delivery, under the oversight of the Permanent Secretary as Accounting Officer for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and Steve Barclay, Secretary of State.

You have personal responsibility for the delivery of the Collections and Packaging Reforms Programme and will be held accountable for the delivery of its objectives, with policy intent and outcomes expected.

This encompasses securing and protecting its vision, ensuring that it is governed responsibly, reported on honestly, escalated appropriately and for influencing the context, culture, and operating environment of the programme.

You are also responsible for ensuring the ongoing viability of the programme and recommending its pause or termination if appropriate. Where issues arise, which you are unable to resolve, you are responsible for escalating these to the Defra Executive Committee.

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 for GMPP projects and programmes are personally accountable to parliamentary select committees.

This means that from the date of this letter, you will be held personally accountable to and could be called by select committees to account for and explain the decisions and actions you have taken to deliver the Collections and Packaging Reforms Programme.

It is important to be clear that your accountability relates only to implementation. Within the agreed terms in this letter, it will remain for the Minister to account for the relevant policy decisions and development.

More information on this is set out in [Giving Evidence to Select Committees - Guidance for Civil Servants](#), sometimes known as the Osmotherly Rules. Information on the roles and responsibilities of the SRO are detailed in the Infrastructure and Project Authority's guidance on [the role of the senior responsible owner](#). You should also make yourself familiar with the [Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery](#), the requirements of the Government Project Delivery Framework, and the guidance and requirements for project delivery as set by Defra Portfolio Directorate.

Time commitment and tenure

Your role will require 100% of your time to be spent on the implementation of the Resources & Waste Strategy, of which Collections and Packaging Reforms Programme delivery comprises at least 80%.

You are required to undertake this role until achievement of the close of the Collections and Packaging Reforms Programme, planned for 31st March 2027. Progress towards this will be reflected in your personal objectives.

Any changes to the agreed time commitment or tenure of the role, as set out above, will require both departmental and Infrastructure & Projects Authority consent.

Objectives and performance criteria

The policy intent supported by this programme will deliver significant changes to the waste collection and recycling sector, including bringing benefits such as the creation of green jobs, significant carbon savings and contributing to enabling a transition to Net Zero GHG emissions by 2050. The reforms will help increase recycling rates, allowing more ambitious recycling targets to be met. The UK government has a target of 65% municipal (household and household-like) waste recycling by 2035. The reforms will also help reduce littering; create a higher quality of material collected for recycling – supporting growth in the UK reprocessing industry; make producers responsible for the management of packaging waste; and create carbon emission savings, reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill and incinerated.

Any proposed changes to scope which impacts on this intent or the realisation of benefits must be authorised by the Resources and Waste Programme Board and may be subject to further levels of approval.

- The vision of the programme is a world class collection and packaging system that champions the reduction, reuse and recycling of materials. This system will embody a foundational change in how we manage waste, equipping all four nations to lead a managed transition towards a prosperous economy defined by responsibility, circularity, and resource efficiency. Together, we will minimise the environmental impacts of packaging and maximise the contribution that packaging reform can make to Net Zero and the protection of our environment. Its objectives are to: Foster prosperity right across the UK, creating the conditions for vibrant and innovative supply chains to embrace this foundational change and invest in new technologies, capacity, and jobs that have the environment at their core.

- Reduce our carbon emissions from packaging, making our materials and resources last for longer, and disposing of them responsibly once they are no longer useful.
- Ensure that citizens across the four nations enjoy and actively participate in a more consistent recycling experience, boosting recycling and reuse, reducing residual waste, and giving supply chains the higher quality recycled material that they need to make better choices.
- Transform our cultural attitude towards waste, making sure that more of it ends up being reused and recycled rather than littering our streets, fields, forests and beaches.

Your personal objectives and performance criteria which relate to the programme are:

- Deliver the objectives, the policy intent of this programme, as set out in the Programme Business Case and related legislation (specifically excluding that which applies to only to Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland)
- Contribute to the 25 Year Environment Plan goals and Net Zero objectives by reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with waste sent to incineration and landfill.
- Provide overall leadership, decision making and strategic direction. Ensure the strategic direction remains aligned with any changes in political or business priorities.
- Agree and own the programme vision and success criteria with the Programme Director who you will appoint, advise, coach and provide strategic direction.
- Establish an appropriate Governance structure, appoint a qualified Board to deliver the Programme and Chair the Board.
- Maintain positive engagement with all stakeholders and the Ministerial team to support activities linked to programme delivery, including HMT, IPA and the Cabinet Office.
- Own the business cases that the Programme is responsible for, assure on-going viability, and ensure benefits tracking mechanisms are established. Refer any significant concerns about feasibility, value for money, regularity or propriety to the Defra Accounting Officer.

You are expected to run your project in accordance with the [Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery](#), the other [Functional Standards](#) as applicable to this programme and the requirements of the Government Project Delivery Framework.

Extent and limit of accountability

Finance and Controls

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

You should note that where expenditure is considered novel, contentious, repercussive, or likely to result in costs to other parts of the public sector, HM Treasury approval will be required, regardless of whether the programme expenditure exceeds the delegated authority set by HM Treasury.

If in doubt about whether approval is required you should, in the first instance, consult departmental finance colleagues before raising with the relevant HM Treasury spending team.

The overall estimated budget, resourcing requirements and tolerances for your project/programme will be agreed as part of the approval process. You will be expected to deliver within these tolerances and report quarterly on these as part of GMPP reporting.

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 HM Treasury delegated limits and Cabinet Office controls relevant to the Collections and Packaging Reform Programme. Information on these controls can be found here: [Cabinet Office controls](#).

Delegated authority

You are authorised to:

- approve expenditure of £10 million
- agree project rescheduling within agreed tolerance periods and agree milestones set within the individual project business cases, but rescheduling beyond that must be agreed with Defra Executive Committee
- recommend to Sarah Homer (Director General for Portfolio Delivery) and the Defra Executive Committee the need to either pause or terminate the programme where necessary and in a timely manner.

These authority limits are subject to change and other conditions or tolerances may be set as part of the business case approval and ongoing monitoring processes which you should then operate within.

Where issues arise which take you outside of these authority limits which you are unable to resolve, you are responsible for escalating these issues to Sarah Homer (Director General for Portfolio Delivery) and the Defra Executive Committee.

Appointments

You should appoint a full time Programme Director to support you in the management of this programme and make other appointments as required for the control and delivery of your programme within your delegated authority.

Governance and assurance

You should pay attention to ensuring effective governance for your programme, including the establishment of a programme board with appropriate membership and clear terms of reference.

As primary owner, you must ensure that the programme secures business case approval from Defra's Investment Committee, Cabinet Office and HM Treasury as appropriate. You should also ensure that the programme remains aligned to the strategic outcomes, costs, timescales, and benefits in line with the approved business case as well as monitoring the context within which the programme is being delivered to ensure it remains valid.

Where a change impacts the scope, costs, benefits, or planned delivery milestones agreed as part of an agreed business case, you are responsible for following the agreed change request approval process and setting a new, approved, business case baseline.

You should ensure that an accounting officer assessment is completed alongside the approval of the Outline Business Case and that this is published on GOV.UK as part of the government's transparency requirements on major projects.

You are responsible for bringing to the attention of the accounting officer any material changes in the programme which could require a new accounting officer assessment to be completed and published. [Guidance on completing accounting officer assessments](#) for major projects is available from HM Treasury.

Although you are directly accountable for this programme, you are also expected to support delivery of the department's overall strategic objectives.

This means that you are expected to work collaboratively with other SROs and project directors in adjacent projects and programmes and with the Defra portfolio Directorate and Portfolio Director to manage dependencies, resources, schedules, and funding to support delivery of the overall change the department needs to achieve its strategic objectives.

You should ensure that appropriate and proportionate assurance is in place and agree on the level and frequency of assurance reviews through the maintenance of an integrated assurance and approvals plan. You should develop this plan and its maintenance in collaboration with the Departmental Assurance Coordinator and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

Programme status, reporting and transparency requirements.

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

You are responsible for ensuring the honest and timely reporting on the position of the programme to the Infrastructure and Projects Authority while it remains on the GMPP and for providing reports and information to the Defra portfolio office as required. Reporting should include carbon measurement, and other sustainable development goals demonstrating evidence that the project contributes to an overarching environmental strategy and is aligned with defined Net Zero pathways. Information on the programme will be published annually by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

As the SRO of a programme that is within scope of the cross-government Net Zero Portfolio you are additionally required to report into the Net Zero and Climate Change governance structure, specifically reporting into the Net Zero National Security Implementation Group Sub-Group and the Climate Action Implementation Committee.

You are responsible for publishing on GOV.UK a summary of the accounting office assessment completed in line with the approval of the Outline Business Case and summaries of any subsequent assessments should they be required.

Development and support

As a graduate of the Major Projects Leadership Academy (MPLA), you are expected to maintain your continuing professional development as a project leader, including your status as an accredited assurance reviewer. To maintain your accreditation, you will be required to participate in a review at least once every 12 months.

To widen experience and understanding of the role, SROs are also expected to become accredited assurance reviewers and to lead or participate in such reviews for other government departments, the wider public sector, and other areas of Defra as appropriate.

The department will assist you in securing the necessary resources to support the programme, and will set clear guidance, requirements and standards, which align to the [Government Functional Standard on Project Delivery](#), to enable good governance and effective delivery.

You will be part of the department's cohort of major project leaders who will be expected to support each other, share good practice and lessons learned, and to collectively develop solutions.

You should liaise with the department's Head of Profession for project delivery to discuss the maintenance and development of your delivery and leadership skills.

The Infrastructure and Projects Authority will be available to you for support, advice, and assurance throughout the programme's time on the GMPP.

Following approval of the business case and entry onto the Defra Portfolio, the Defra Executive Committee will provide ongoing oversight and support and will take steps to help resolve and escalate risks, issues or constraints that are acting as a blocker to successful delivery.

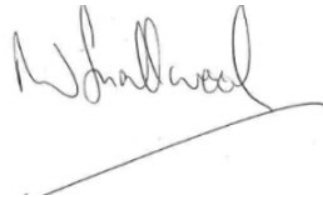
We would like to take this opportunity to wish you every success in your role as SRO.

Yours sincerely,



Tamara Finkelstein

Permanent Secretary, Defra



Nick Smallwood

Chief Executive Officer, Infrastructure and
Projects Authority

CONFIRMATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF APPOINTMENT

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



Emma Bourne OBE

6th March 2024