

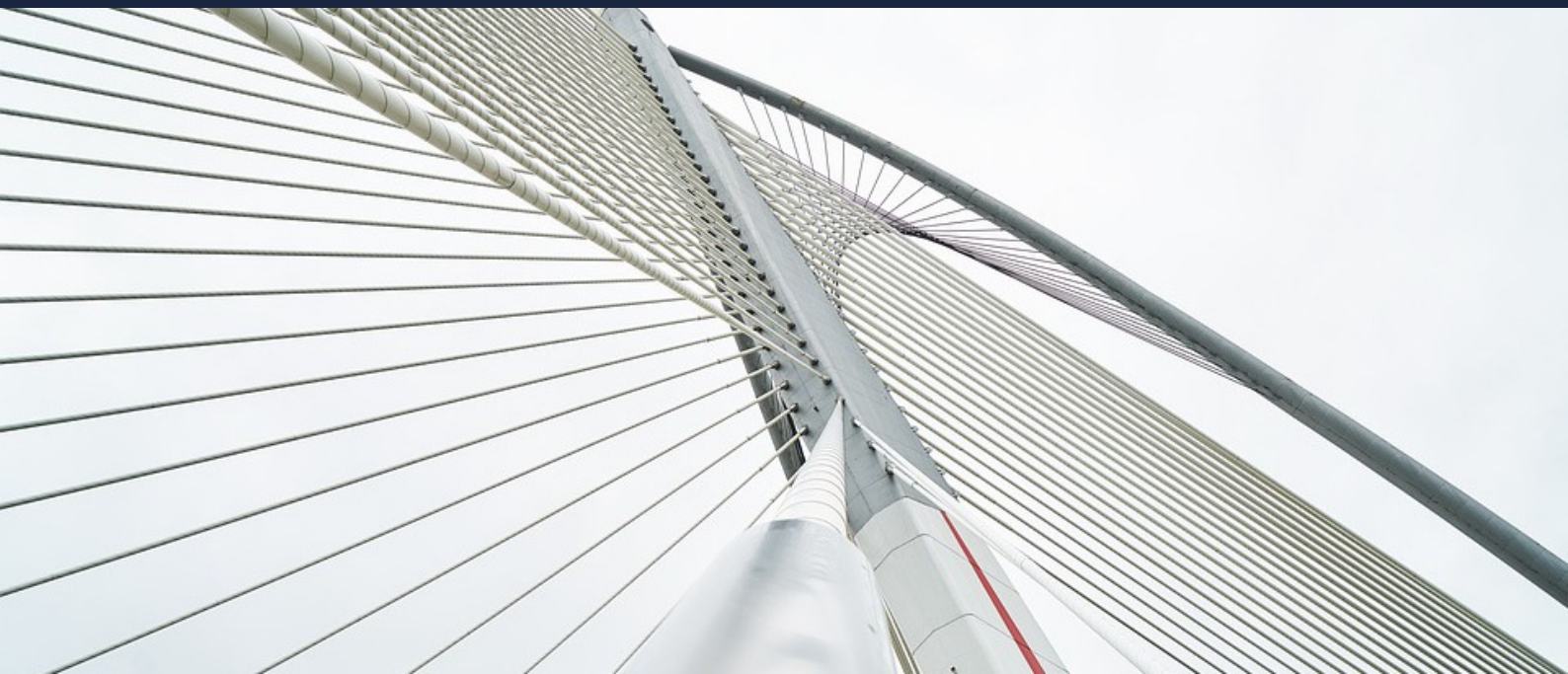
BEYOND PROJECT-BY-PROJECT DELIVERY

Programme Management Methodology

A Practitioner's Framework for Multi-Project Coordination and Benefits
Delivery

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Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Why This Methodology Exists

Organisations today execute multiple related projects simultaneously. Without coordinated governance and benefits tracking, these initiatives can fail to deliver intended value even when individual projects succeed. Programme Management is the framework that sits above project management to ensure coordinated delivery of shared strategic outcomes and measurable business benefits.

This methodology provides a structured, scalable approach to programme governance applicable to organisations of any size and across any industry.

The Five Core Challenges Addressed

- **Siloed Project Delivery:** Projects execute independently, creating duplicate effort and missed sequencing opportunities.
- **Unmanaged Interdependencies:** Cross-project dependencies are invisible or unmonitored, creating surprises and delays.
- **Scattered Benefits Realisation:** Benefits are tracked by individual projects rather than aggregated, obscuring true programme value.
- **Lack of Coordinated Governance:** Decision-making happens at project level, unable to resolve programme-wide trade-offs.
- **Strategic Misalignment:** Projects are funded and prioritised without consideration of how they collectively serve strategy.

The Programme Management Solution

This methodology addresses all five challenges through six guiding principles, five programme phases aligned to project delivery, five key roles, and fourteen essential artefacts.

How to Use This Methodology

Step 1: Assess Programme Complexity (Annex A) - Does it meet the three qualification criteria (≥ 2 projects, shared objective, benefit aggregation)? - Score complexity on seven factors. - Determine governance level: light (0–6 points), moderate (7–12), or full (13–14).

Step 2: Understand the Phases (Chapter 2) - Review P0–P4 phases and what happens in each. - Identify which deliverables apply to your programme's complexity level.

Step 3: Establish Governance (Chapter 3) - Form the Programme Board and assign roles (Chapter 4). - Approve the Programme Charter at gate P1. - Confirm reporting cadence and escalation paths.

Step 4: Plan and Execute (Chapter 5) - Create required artefacts. - Maintain programme plan and benefits register as living documents. - Hold quarterly Interdependency Map reviews. - Update Programme Dashboard monthly.

Step 5: Close and Learn (Chapter 2, Phase P4) - Conduct final benefits realisation review. - Document lessons learned. - Transfer benefits tracking to operational teams. - Celebrate and share success.

Programme Management is not bureaucracy — it is a system for delivering coordinated value from multiple related projects.

PART

Part I — Foundations

CHAPTER 1

Chapter 1: Introduction & Foundations

Chapter 1: Introduction & Foundations

1.1 Why Programme Management Matters

Organisations today rarely execute single, isolated projects. Instead, they manage portfolios of related initiatives that must be coordinated to deliver shared strategic outcomes. Programme Management ensures that multiple related projects are delivered in a coordinated way to achieve shared strategic outcomes and benefits.

1.2 Six Guiding Principles

1.2.1 Outcome-Driven

Success is measured in business benefits delivered, not just project completion.

1.2.2 Integrated Governance

Programme milestones align with project tollgates; decisions are made in context of the entire programme.

1.2.3 One View of the Truth

Programme artefacts aggregate project data into a single view of benefits, risks, dependencies, and delivery health.

1.2.4 Active Benefits Management

Benefits are planned, tracked, and realised throughout the lifecycle, not treated as a post-project activity.

1.2.5 Dependency Visibility

Inter-project dependencies are logged, monitored, and resolved proactively. Interdependencies are the primary source of programme risk.

1.2.6 Scaling by Scope

Apply full programme management only where multiple related projects exist with shared objectives.

1.3 Programme Lifecycle Alignment with Project Phases

Programme governance gates (P0–P4) are aligned to project phases to synchronise review cycles and avoid duplicate governance.

1.3.1 P0 – Mandate

Confirm strategic need, initial scope, and outcome vision.

1.3.2 P1 – Initiation

Approve programme charter, governance, high-level roadmap.

1.3.3 P2 – Planning

Finalise benefits realisation plan, dependency map, resource plan.

1.3.4 P3 – Execution Review

Programme-wide health check, benefits tracking, sequencing adjustments.

1.3.5 P4 – Closure

Benefits review, lessons learned, handover to operational teams.

1.4 Key Roles Overview

1.4.1 Programme Sponsor

Senior executive accountable for the overall success of the programme.

1.4.2 Programme Manager

Leads day-to-day programme coordination.

1.4.3 Programme Board

Strategic oversight body that reviews progress, approves gates, and resolves cross-project issues.

1.4.4 Benefits Owners

Accountable for realising specific benefits as defined in the Benefits Realisation Plan.

1.4.5 Programme Change Lead

Coordinates project-level change managers to ensure consistent stakeholder engagement, communication, and adoption tracking across the programme.

PART

Part II — Methodology & Governance

CHAPTER 2

Chapter 2: Phase-by-Phase Methodology

Chapter 2: Phase-by-Phase Methodology

2.1 P0 — Mandate Phase

2.1.1 Objectives

- Confirm whether the initiative requires programme-level governance.
- Identify strategic drivers and initial intended benefits.
- Outline related projects and potential sequencing.
- Create early view of interdependencies and risks.

2.1.2 Key Activities

- Conduct initial programme eligibility check (threshold: ≥ 2 related projects + shared strategic objective + benefit aggregation).
- Draft high-level Programme Mandate.
- Identify potential Programme Sponsor and initial stakeholders.
- Begin initial benefits mapping.

2.1.3 Deliverables

- Programme Mandate (draft).
- Initial Benefits List.
- Initial Programme Risk & Dependency Log.

2.2 P1 — Initiation Phase

2.2.1 Objectives

- Define the programme's vision, scope, outcomes, governance, and initial roadmap.
- Secure Programme Board approval to proceed.

2.2.2 Key Activities

- Develop and approve the Programme Charter.
- Define governance structure and Programme Board composition.
- Confirm high-level sequencing of projects within the programme.
- Assign Benefits Owners and Programme Manager.

2.2.3 Deliverables

- Approved Programme Charter.

- Governance & Roles Register.
- High-Level Programme Roadmap.
- Draft Programme Benefits Register.

2.3 P2 — Planning Phase

2.3.1 Objectives

- Finalise detailed programme-level plans.
- Align all project schedules into an integrated programme plan.
- Baseline benefits, risks, and dependencies.

2.3.2 Key Activities

- Develop Benefits Realisation Plan (with owners and measurement approach).
- Build detailed Programme Interdependency Map.
- Create consolidated Programme Risk & Issue Register.
- Finalise integrated programme schedule.

2.3.3 Deliverables

- Benefits Realisation Plan (baselined).
- Programme Interdependency Map.
- Programme Risk & Issue Log.
- Aggregated Programme Schedule.

2.4 P3 — Execution Review Phase

2.4.1 Objectives

- Monitor and steer programme delivery against benefits plan.
- Proactively manage sequencing, risks, and interdependencies.
- Maintain strategic alignment.

2.4.2 Key Activities

- Conduct mid-programme health check.
- Update benefits tracking and forecasts.
- Adjust sequencing and reallocate resources where necessary.
- Resolve cross-project issues and escalate as needed.

2.4.3 Deliverables

- Programme Health Report.
- Updated Benefits Forecast.

- Updated Interdependency Map.

2.5 P4 — Build & Test Phase

2.5.1 Objectives

- Coordinate final delivery phases of projects to ensure smooth sequencing and readiness for benefits realisation.
- Validate partial benefits delivered to date.

2.5.2 Key Activities

- Aggregate and review project delivery reports.
- Track benefits realisation progress.
- Monitor dependency closure and risk mitigation.

2.5.3 Deliverables

- Programme Dashboard (delivery, benefits, risk, change readiness).
- Benefits Progress Report.
- Updated Programme Risk & Issue Log.

2.6 P5 — Go Live & Closure Phase

2.6.1 Objectives

- Validate and confirm all programme benefits.
- Close governance structures and hand over to operational teams.
- Capture lessons learned at the programme level.

2.6.2 Key Activities

- Conduct final benefits realisation review.
- Document programme-level lessons learned.
- Formalise handover to benefits owners and operational teams.

2.6.3 Deliverables

- Final Benefits Realisation Report.
- Programme Closure Report.
- Programme-Level Lessons Learned.

CHAPTER 3

Chapter 3: Governance & Approval Criteria

Chapter 3: Governance & Approval Criteria

3.1 Purpose

Programme governance ensures that multiple related projects collectively deliver the intended strategic outcomes, benefits, and business value. It provides a coordinated decision-making structure above the project level, enabling timely escalation, benefit tracking, dependency resolution, and strategic alignment.

3.2 Programme Governance Structure

3.2.1 Programme Board

Provides strategic oversight for the programme. Approves major decisions, changes, and scope adjustments at programme level. Chaired by the Programme Sponsor, includes senior functional leaders, Programme Manager, governance representative, and Benefits Owners.

3.2.2 Programme Manager

Leads day-to-day programme delivery coordination. Reports on progress, risks, dependencies, and benefits to the Programme Board.

3.2.3 Programme Change Lead

Coordinates project-level change managers to ensure consistent messaging, stakeholder engagement, and adoption across the programme.

3.2.4 Benefits Owners

Accountable for realising benefits as defined in the Benefits Realisation Plan.

3.3 Programme Gate Model

Gate	Purpose	Aligned Project Stages	Approval Criteria
P0 – Mandate	Approve initial programme concept, scope, and expected outcomes.	Before first project	Mandate approved. Initial benefits identified. Sponsor and PM assigned.
P1 – Initiation	Approve Charter, governance, and roadmap.	After first project	Charter approved. Board established. Benefits Register drafted.
P2 – Planning	Approve detailed plan, benefits, dependencies, and risk register.	During early P2	Benefits Plan approved.

Interdependency Map approved. Schedule agreed. | | P3 – Execution | Validate mid-programme performance and benefit progress. | Across P3/P4 | Benefits forecast approved. Dependencies reviewed. Dashboard approved. | | P4 – Closure | Confirm benefits delivered and close governance. | After final project P5 | Benefits Report approved. Closure report signed. Lessons documented. |

3.4 Governance Requirements

- Programme Board Meetings: Minimum monthly during delivery.
- Integrated Reporting: Projects submit updates to Programme Manager, who produces consolidated Programme Dashboard.
- Escalation Path: Issues unresolved at project level escalate to Programme Board.
- Decision Rights: Approve project additions/removals, approve scope/budget changes, resolve resource conflicts.

3.5 Programme Gate Success Criteria

- Strategic Alignment: Programme remains aligned with portfolio and corporate strategy.
- Benefits Readiness: Benefits plan is up-to-date, measurable, and owned.
- Dependency Management: All critical dependencies identified, monitored, and under control.
- Risk Control: No unmitigated high-impact risks without agreed action plans.
- Resource Alignment: Programme resources are sufficient, funded, and confirmed.

PART

Part III — Execution & Tools

CHAPTER 4

Chapter 4: Roles & Responsibilities (RACI)

Chapter 4: Roles & Responsibilities (RACI)

4.1 Purpose

This section defines the key programme-level roles and clarifies accountability for programme management deliverables.

4.2 Key Programme Management Roles

4.2.1.1. Programme Sponsor

Senior executive accountable for overall success. Champions the strategic vision, secures resources, removes barriers, and escalates unresolved issues.

4.2.2 2. Programme Manager

Leads day-to-day management. Maintains the programme plan, benefits register, interdependency map, and consolidated risk log.

4.2.3 3. Programme Board

Strategic oversight body chaired by the Sponsor. Reviews progress, approves gates, resolves cross-project issues, holds Benefits Owners accountable.

4.2.4 4. Benefits Owners

Accountable for specific benefit realisation. Ensure measurement and tracking mechanisms are in place.

4.2.5 5. Programme Change Lead

Coordinates project-level change managers for consistent stakeholder engagement, communication, and adoption tracking.

4.2.6 6. Project Managers (within programme)

Manage individual project delivery. Provide status, risk, dependency, and benefit contribution updates to the Programme Manager.

4.2.7 7. Governance Representative

Provides standards, guidance, and assurance for programme governance.

CHAPTER 5

Chapter 5: Templates & Tools

Chapter 5: Templates & Tools

5.1 Purpose

This section defines the core programme-level artefacts required to plan, govern, and monitor a programme. These templates are mandatory for all initiatives classified as programmes.

5.2 How to Use This Chapter

- Select all programme-level artefacts when the programme threshold is met: ≥ 2 related projects + shared strategic objective + benefits aggregation required.
- Maintain programme artefacts in parallel with project artefacts – updates occur at each tollgate review.
- Store final versions in the central repository, with version control managed by the Programme Manager.

5.3 Programme Management Deliverables – Summary

Artefact	Purpose	Owner	When	Updated
Mandate	Strategic intent, scope, rationale Sponsor P0 P1	Charter Objectives, governance, roadmap Sponsor P1 P2		
Governance Register	Structure, boards, roles PM P1	Ongoing		
Roadmap	Project sequencing PM P1 P2–P5	Benefits Register Benefits, owners, measures BOs P1		
Each cycle	Benefits Plan Delivery, measurement, tracking PM P2 P3–P5			
Interdependency Map	Dependencies, sequencing PM P2 P3–P5			
Risk & Issue Log	Programme-level risks/issues PM P2	Ongoing		
Schedule	Integrated project timelines PM P2	Ongoing		
Dashboard	Delivery, benefits, risk, change PM P3			
Monthly	Health Report Programme performance review PM P3	As needed		
Benefits Report (Final)	Benefits delivered vs. baseline PM P5	Closure		
Closure Report	Programme completion, sign-off PM P5	Closure		
Lessons Learned	Successes, issues, recommendations PM P5	Closure		

5.4 Template Descriptions

5.4.1 Programme Mandate

Initial document to justify programme approach. Covers strategic drivers, anticipated benefits, related projects, scope boundaries, initial risks/dependencies. Keep 2–4 pages

and high-level until approved.

5.4.2 Programme Charter

Primary definition of programme's objectives, governance, scope, and outcomes. Includes vision, measurable objectives, governance structure, roadmap, initial benefits register, budget outline. Must be approved before significant investment.

5.4.3 Benefits Realisation Plan

Roadmap for delivering and tracking benefits through lifecycle. Covers measurement methodology, timelines, dependencies, ownership, tracking approach. Baselined at P2, reviewed at each gate.

5.4.4 Programme Interdependency Map

Visual map of critical inter-project dependencies and sequencing. Shows dependency type, source, impact, mitigation. Reviewed quarterly.

5.4.5 Programme Dashboard

Monthly one-page view of programme health covering delivery, benefits, risks, change readiness. Data sourced from project reports and benefits tracking.

CHAPTER 6

Chapter 6: Best Practices for Programme Management

Chapter 6: Best Practices for Programme Management

6.1 1. Anchor Decisions to Strategic Outcomes

Keep focus on why the programme exists — benefits, outcomes, and strategic alignment — not just delivering outputs. Use the Programme Benefits Register as the anchor document in every Programme Board meeting.

6.2 2. Integrate, Don't Duplicate

Programme Management is a coordinating and value-delivery function, not bureaucracy. Integrate programme oversight into existing governance rhythms. Pull data from project-level artefacts to populate programme dashboards, avoiding duplicate effort.

6.3 3. Actively Manage Interdependencies

Interdependencies are where most programme risks originate. Maintain and review the Interdependency Map at least quarterly. Use joint planning workshops with Project Managers to agree sequencing, milestones, and dependency resolution.

6.4 4. Treat Benefits Like a Deliverable

Benefits are planned, tracked, and managed from P0, not post-project activities. Assign Benefits Owners early. Link benefits tracking with the Programme Change Lead's adoption metrics for complete view of delivery and value.

6.5 5. Keep Governance Focused

Use Programme Board time for strategic decision-making: benefits realisation, strategic alignment, major scope or budget changes, cross-project conflict resolution. Handle operational and project-specific issues at project board level unless they have programme-wide impact.

6.6 6. Maintain Clear Escalation Paths

Define and communicate escalation routes from project boards □ programme board □ portfolio board. Ensure escalation criteria are clear so only relevant issues reach the programme level.

6.7 7. Build a Strong Programme Team

Invest in the Programme Manager role — requires leadership, negotiation, strategic thinking. Co-locate (physically or virtually) the Programme Manager, Change Lead, and support staff. Develop strong working relationships between Programme Manager and Project Managers — avoid command and control.

6.8 8. Scale to Fit

Not all multi-project efforts require full governance. Apply threshold consistently: ≥ 2 related projects + shared strategic objective + benefit aggregation required. For smaller programmes, use light version — fewer meetings, simplified dashboards, but still track benefits and dependencies.

6.9 9. Ensure Change and Benefits Work Hand-in-Hand

Engage the Programme Change Lead from the start. Ensure stakeholder engagement, adoption, and behaviour change align with benefit delivery. Don't declare benefits realised unless adoption and usage levels meet agreed thresholds.

6.10 10. Close Well and Learn

Conduct thorough programme closure — celebrate successes, document lessons learned, feed back into knowledge base. Review benefits realisation after closure to verify they are sustained in operational teams.

6.11 Practical Tips from Experience

- Visualise the programme: Keep high-level roadmap visible to all teams.
- Communicate simply: Avoid jargon; make reports easy for non-technical stakeholders.
- Stay flexible: Accept that sequencing and scope will evolve — governance manages change, not resists it.
- Don't forget the people side: Benefits are delivered through people adopting new ways of working.

ANNEX A — Programme Complexity Assessment Guide

Purpose

To determine whether an initiative should be managed as a programme and to scale governance and documentation requirements appropriately.

Step 1: Programme Qualification Check

An initiative qualifies as a programme if it meets all three criteria:

1. Multiple Projects — At least two related projects.
2. Shared Strategic Objective — All projects contribute to a single set of outcomes/benefits.
3. Benefit Aggregation Required — Benefits need to be tracked and realised collectively.

If criteria not met □ manage as separate projects under portfolio governance.

Step 2: Programme Complexity Rating

Score each factor 0–2 points (0=Low, 1=Medium, 2=High):

Factor	0 (Low)	1 (Medium)	2 (High)
Number of Projects	2–3	4–6	7+
Budget Scale	< €1M	€1M–€5M	> €5M
Strategic Impact	Minor improvement	Single business unit transformation	Multi-business or enterprise transformation
Geographic Spread	Single country (same region)	Multi-region	global
Dependency Complexity	Few, low-impact	Multiple within programme	Complex cross-portfolio
Benefit Scale	< €0.5M or minor	€0.5M–€5M or moderate	> €5M or major shift
Stakeholder Scope	Single function	Multiple functions	Cross-enterprise and external

Step 3: Complexity Score Interpretation

- 0–6 points: Light Programme Governance — Fewer formal reviews, simplified dashboard and reporting.
- 7–12 points: Moderate Programme Governance — Full governance with some streamlined artefacts.

- 13–14 points: Full Programme Governance — All governance elements, artefacts, and reporting in full detail.

Step 4: Documentation

Document the decision and rationale in the Programme Mandate. Retain a record of all Programme Complexity Assessments for reference.

ANNEX B — Template Usage by Programme Complexity

Purpose

The outcome of the Programme Complexity Assessment determines the level of governance and range of templates to be used.

Graduated Template Requirements

For light programmes (0–6 points): Only essential artefacts required — Mandate, Charter (simplified), Governance Register, Roadmap, Benefits Register, Risk & Issue Log, and closure documents. Optional artefacts (Benefits Plan, Interdependency Map, Schedule, Dashboard) may be produced if they add value.

For moderate programmes (7–12 points): All core artefacts required, including full Charter, Benefits Plan, Interdependency Map, Schedule, and Dashboard with monthly cadence. Health Report remains optional.

For high-complexity programmes (13–14 points): All templates in full detail, with fully dedicated Programme Manager, robust benefits tracking, monthly Board meetings, and comprehensive reporting including Health Report.

This graduated approach ensures governance effort is proportionate to complexity, avoiding unnecessary overhead while maintaining control and visibility.

Template	Light	Moderate	High	----- ----- ----- -----	Mandate	□	□
□	Charter	Simplified	□	□	Governance Register	□	□
□	□	□	□	Roadmap	□	□	□
□	Benefits Register	□	□	□	Benefits Plan	Optional	□
□	□	□	□	□	Interdependency Map	Optional	□
□	□	□	□	□	Risk & Issue Log	□	□
□	□	□	□	□	Schedule	Optional	□
□	□	□	□	□	Dashboard	Optional (quarterly)	□
□	□	□	□	□	□	(monthly)	□
□	□	□	□	□	□	(monthly)	□
□	□	□	□	□	Health Report	—	Optional
□	□	□	□	□	□	□	Benefits Report
□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
□	□	□	□	□	Closure Report	□	□
□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
□	□	□	□	□	Lessons Learned	Optional	□
□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□

ANNEX C — Programme Manager Support Model

Purpose

The level of support for the Programme Manager is determined by the programme's complexity rating. This ensures the Manager focuses on leadership, decision-making, and strategic alignment rather than administrative tasks.

Support Levels by Complexity

Light (0–6 points)

Programme Manager may be part-time; receives shared admin support from project management community or governance function.

Moderate (7–12 points)

Programme Manager is mostly dedicated; governance function provides structured support for reporting, governance packs, and scheduling.

High (13–14 points)

Programme Manager is fully dedicated; supported by an assigned coordinator for data collection, reporting consolidation, and meeting administration.

Sources of Support

- Governance Function: Methodology guidance, template library, quality assurance.
- Portfolio Office: Alignment with strategic priorities, escalation management.
- Project Managers: Inputs for dependencies, risks, and status updates.
- Programme Change Lead: Stakeholder engagement and adoption tracking.

This structured support model ensures the Programme Manager role remains focused on delivering strategic outcomes and managing programme-level risks and benefits.