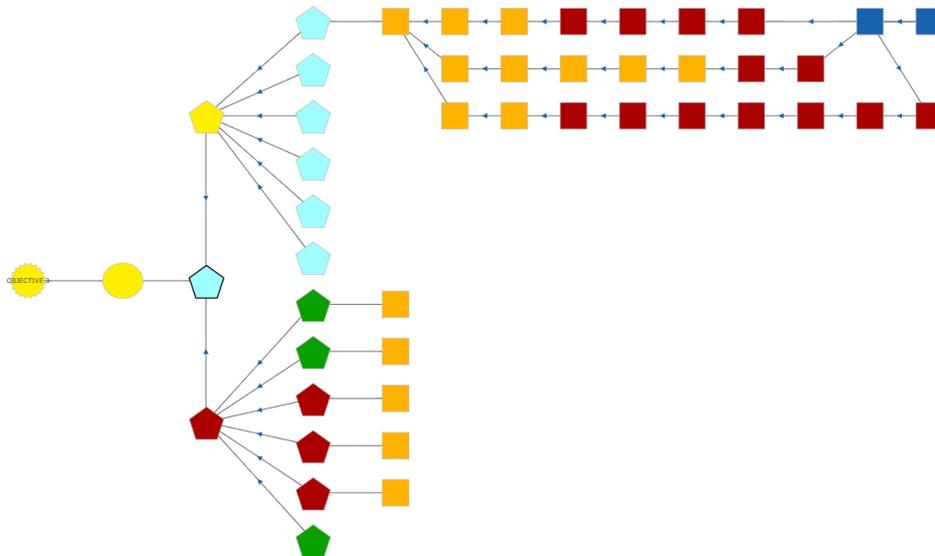

Sustainability & Transformation Partnerships (STP) Challenges

Consistency



How to ensure STP plan consistency

The first blog in this series set out the top five challenges faced by the 44 Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STP) in England; Coherence, Clarity, Consistency, Collaboration and Control. This fourth blog in the series provides insight as to how to approach the third of these challenges – Consistency. How do you ensure STP plan consistency?

How do you ensure a consistent approach to delivering your STP plans across a diverse range of organisations that makes the best use of finite resources?

Even if you've trained people in a consistent approach to management and delivery, without a mechanism to embed that approach across the partnership, you will experience significant variation resulting in waste, duplication and inefficiency.

Why is STP Plan Consistency important?

Once you are clear on why you are doing what you are doing (see my previous blog on [Clarity](#)) the next step is to understand how best to do it.

Any organisation needs to have a consistent approach to delivery and standard ways of working if it is to be successful. This becomes even more critical when working in partnership across multiple organisations, such as an STP.

In the absence of a consistent approach, your teams will do the next best thing – improvise. Typically, they will work individually, or in small groups, which results in lots of well-intentioned misdirection. Varying and unpredictable processes invariably lead to people working at cross purposes and in an extremely inefficient manner.

What is STP Plan Consistency?

Consistency is about answering the question 'How?' How do I go about achieving this? How am I meant to deliver this task? How can I work collaboratively across the partnership? How do I work in a way that adds most value to the STP?

How people work effectively, efficiently and collaboratively across an organisation or partnership is embodied informally within its culture and formally within its documented and active business processes. Formal business processes are only useful if they enable people to work efficiently, effectively and collaboratively and if they are adhered to.

Defining and adopting a consistent approach to delivering your plans requires clear, simple, logical and shared processes that are communicated and adopted across the partnership.

STP Plan Consistency provides stability

Consistency helps to ensure that everyone knows what they need to work on and provides a mechanism for monitoring and managing the performance of the applied processes. Adhering strictly to a well-defined business language in everything that you do helps enormously.

Consistency reduces inefficiency, duplication and redundancy and enables you to introduce integrity and cohesion across the partnership.

Most people don't like change, they like stability and to remain in their comfort zone. They like to come to work and know what they need to do, how they are going to do it and how it contributes to the bigger picture. It is consistency that provides this stability for people.

STP Plan Consistency provides quality

Everything that we deliver has four aspects to it:

1. Objective - what am I trying to accomplish and why?
2. Outcome - what am I expecting the measurable outcome to be?
3. Output - what physical things am I going to deliver?
4. Process - how am I going to create the output?

This structure is in priority order. If you address what you are trying to accomplish, and why, followed by the outcome that you are trying to deliver, then the quality (conformance to requirement) of your output will be driven up naturally. The process is the controlled activity that you undertake to deliver the output and should be clearly defined and understood by the partnership.

STP Plan Consistency across project management

For example, providing a consistent approach to project management can have an enormously positive impact on the productivity and success of the STP.

Providing a standard template that sets out all the required phases, project management milestones and deliverables along with the key project deliverables enables all projects to deliver, report and be governed consistently, efficiently and effectively.

Productivity increases and the adopted project management methodology (e.g. PRINCE2) is deployed and adhered to across the whole partnership just by way of adopting your standard project management template.

This approach has many benefits, not least of all it can be used to ensure that all projects have an agreed set of deliverables and an associated business case.

Phases		
	RAG : All RAGS	Milestone Type : All Enablers
1 Pre-Project Approvals		
1	PROJECT MANDATE (SWL)	Management Milestone/Enabler (End)
2	PRE-PROJECT APPROVALS PHASE COMPLETE (SWL)	Management Milestone
2 Initiation		
3	PROJECT INITIAL RISK ASSESSMENT (SWL)	Management Milestone/Enabler (End)
4	PROJECT PLAN (SWL)	Management Milestone/Enabler (End)
5	PROJECT PID (SWL)	Management Milestone/Enabler (End)
6	PROJECT INITIATION PHASE COMPLETE (SWL)	Management Milestone
3 Project Governance & Reporting		
7	PROJECT BOARD ESTABLISHED (SWL)	Management Milestone/Enabler (End)
8	PROJECT BOARD SCHEDULED (SWL)	Management Milestone/Enabler (End)
9	PROJECT CHECKPOINT AND HIGHLIGHT REPORTS SCHEDULED (SWL)	Management Milestone/Enabler (End)
4 Communications & Engagement		
10	PROJECT COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN (SWL)	Management Milestone/Enabler (End)
11	PROJECT COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT SCHEDULED (SWL)	Management Milestone/Enabler (End)
5 Delivery		
6 Project Closure		
12	PROJECT CLOSURE AND LESSONS LEARNED REPORT (SWL)	Management Milestone/Enabler (End)
13	PROJECT CLOSED (SWL)	Management Milestone/Enabler (End)

Conclusion

Once you've understood why you are doing something (clarity) you then need to understand how to do it (consistency) through rigorous adoption of simple, standard and shared processes across your partnership.

STP plan consistency maximises productivity and quality and enables your partnership to operate as efficiently and effectively as possible to maximise the return on your investment and deliver you shared STP objectives.

Appropriate Business Management Software can help you to define and adopt a consistent way of working and to share this across the multiple organisations that make up your STP.