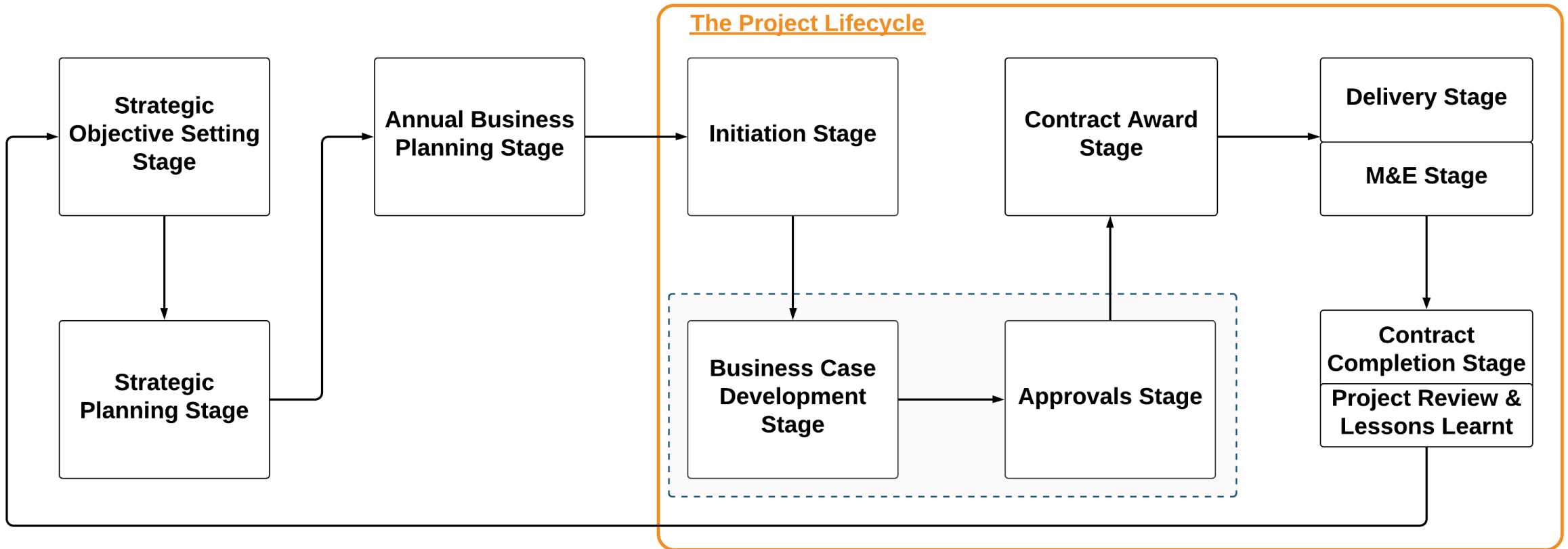




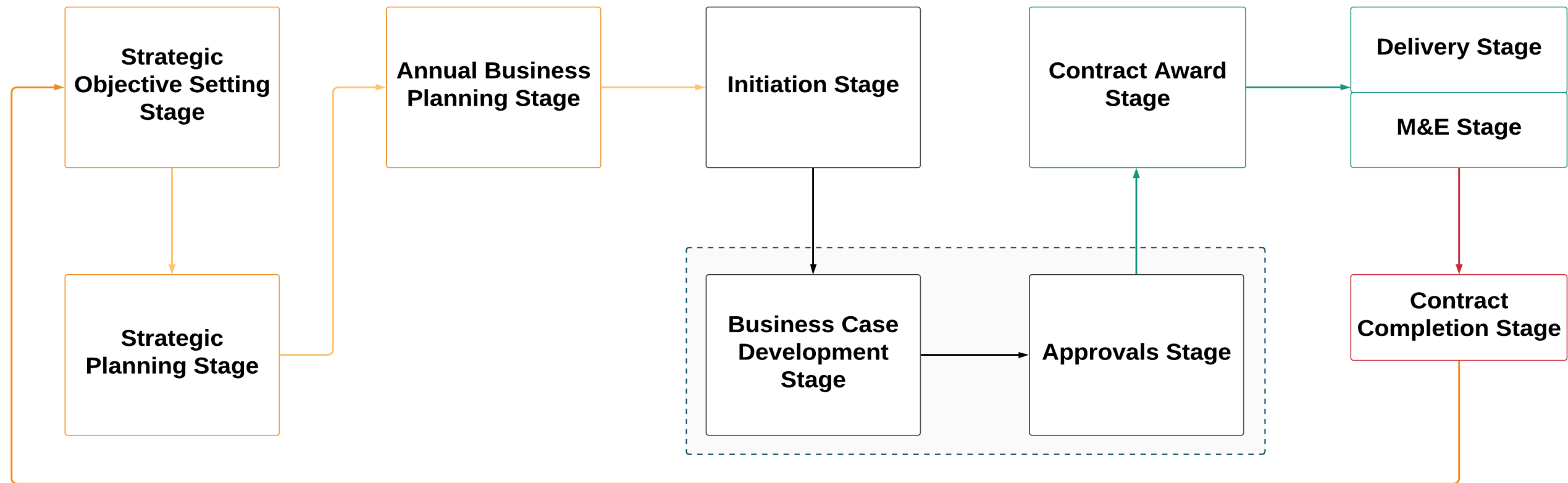
Single Assurance Framework

The Strategic Hub



What is the Assurance Framework?

- The Assurance Framework is a set of processes, protocols and systems designed to provide an evidence-based and independent assessment of the governance, risk management and control mechanisms of an organisation.
- It is applied to the development, delivery and evaluation of all projects and programmes that place a financial liability on the WMCA.
- Its purpose is to set out how the WMCA will use public funds responsibly, openly, transparently and achieve value for money in its activities.
- It determines the process, standards and considerations that need to take place in the development of projects.



PURPOSE OF THE ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

1. Provide financial and governance protections for stewardship of public funds
2. Improve standards of project initiation, development, delivery and oversight
3. Trust and empower our officer expertise
4. Provide consistency, controls and clarity to deliver confidence in WMCAs decision-making and ability to deliver
5. Embed appropriate assurance and lines of defence within project initiation, development and decision-making
6. Manage political and reputational risks
7. Support securing additional funding for the region



PURPOSE OF THE ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

The Single Assurance Framework will provide a single, consistent and standards driven approach to all projects from all funding pots that will:

- respond to the required drivers for change
- deliver National standards compliance
- satisfy our accountability requirements
- deliver, monitor and evaluate our strategic objectives
- provide clarity to project sponsors and applicants
- effectively manage projects and programmes
- ensure decisions are made by appropriate Officers and Members
- better inform our decision-makers

What does this mean for Thematic Boards?

The Single Assurance Framework has implications for Thematic Boards, it requires each Thematic Board to undertake a set of core roles. The intention of the core roles is to provide a consistent role, purpose and approach across all the Boards to help drive effective, clear and accountable decision-making, ensure appropriate political oversight and support for Portfolio Leads and to support the intent to deliver a 'Golden Thread' from strategic objective through initiation, development, delivery and evaluation within the WMCA.

The proposed core roles are as follows:

- i. Play a key role in developing and approve the Portfolio Annual Business Plan - ensuring that it demonstrates a clear 'golden thread' to the WMCA Annual Plan and strategic objectives, highlighting prioritisation considerations where appropriate and then supporting and challenging delivery.
- ii. Provide oversight of the Portfolio Project Pipeline - taking ownership of supporting and challenging the Lead Member on the pipeline and monitoring its content, providing feedback to Business Areas (but not instruction) and performance managing bids and project development to ensure delivery of the golden thread.
- iii. Advise on major policy change within Portfolio - Consider and advise upon major policy change within their thematic area, delivering expert stakeholder engagement and ensuring ownership and accountability.
- iv. Performance manage Portfolio project delivery - at thematic level (below strategic), ensuring effective and appropriate challenge to the delivery of projects and programmes, ensuring the continued delivery of the golden thread

Work is currently underway to develop how the SAF Core Roles will be delivered at each Thematic Board, this will involve engagement with Thematic Boards, WMCA Portfolio Leads and the Mayor.

Work is also underway to examine how improvements can be made to the consistent approach, operation and outputs of Thematic Boards, this will involve reviewing the purpose, functions, membership and operation of meetings.

The Wellbeing Board is invited to ask questions and provide feedback on the operation of the Board and what improvements could be made.

