Guiding Questions

The headline questions	**These are the common sense headlines that start the process. Once you've got overview answers to these. The rest of the questions help you add essential detail to your plans and business case**	**What are we doing?** **Why are we doing it?** **Who is doing it and for whom?** **How are we doing it, and with what?** **When are we doing it and how long will it take?** **How much will it cost and what cost will it save?** **How will we know it's been successful?**
Project element	**Definition**	**Guiding questions**
Purpose and outcomes		
Purpose	High-level statement of what the project is intended to deliver.	What is the project trying to achieve? What is the problem/challenge the project is addressing?
Strategic alignment	Articulates how the project contributes to the unit or ICS strategy.	How does the project align with the unit or ICS strategy? How is the project supporting the core purpose and mission of the unit or ICS?
Operational alignment	Articulates where the project sits in relation to the operational plans and structures.	How does the project deliver departmental objectives? Which department owns or is responsible for initiating and delivering the project? Which functions of the unit or ICS will be served by the successful delivery of the project?
Business need	Clearly specifies how the project will address an identified business need.	What is(are) the key challenge(s)/ opportunity(ies) addressed by the project? What is the business case for the project? Who will benefit and how (link to your stakeholder analysis)? What costs will be saved? What improvements are anticipated? What are the risks/costs of not starting or successfully completing the project?
Outcomes	Capture the high level organisational change aspirations for the project.	What changes in the unit or ICS culture/practice/performance is the project intended to enable?
Outputs/Deliverables	Capture the specific deliverables for the project.	What specific tools, resources, processes or policies will be developed and delivered as a result of the project?

Scope and prioritisation	Delineates the limits of the project, what is in and out of scope, and which elements are essential. Process serves to manage stakeholder expectations, and establish priorities within the project.	What is the scale and scope of the project? Does it need dividing into a family of related sub-projects? What is beyond the scope of the project? What is necessary for the project to be perceived a success?
Baseline analysis	A process to define the nature of the business need and environment relevant to the project. SWOT and PESTLE analysis should be undertaken to sense-test the assumptions underpinning the project proposal. This base-line analysis will inform the expectations for the project and be a benchmark against which the success of the project can be monitored and evaluated.	What is the current position within the unit or ICS, relevant to the project? What internal and external factors are enabling or inhibiting the unit or ICS performance and in what specific areas? How might outputs of your stocktake impact on the project?
Drivers and constraints	The key drivers and constraints in any project are time, quality and resources (money). For example, doing something faster usually requires more money or a compromise on quality; gold-plating something requires more time and/or more money.	Is it most important to complete the project quickly, well or cheaply? What is the appropriate balance of time, quality and money for this project?
People		
Project Sponsor	The senior person to whom the project team is accountable and who in turn is accountable at a strategic level for the success of the project. They are not expected to be operationally active in the execution/delivery of the project.	Does the project sponsor have sufficient influence at a strategic level? How interested is the project sponsor in the progress and success of the project?
Project team • Lead • Coordinator	• The manager with overall responsibility for ensuring the project is delivered to time and to budget. • The staff member responsible for maintaining project documentation and routine progress-chasing,	Who has the expertise for the project? Is the necessary expertise available to the project? Who has the capacity? How will the team work together? How can you identify the right team for your project?

• Expert(s)	and for providing administrative. coordination to the team. • Members of the team with specific specialist technical or conceptual expertise who work on designated tasks within the project.	
Stakeholder reference group	A group of people brought together for consultation about the scope and purpose of the project, to act as champions for the projects, and to help foster effective working relationships. The group should represent the interests of all impacted *stakeholder groups*, should include *enthusiasts and sceptics*, and those with *interest in and influence on* the success of the project.	Who do you want in the group? Who do you need in the group? Who will support the project team? Who has relevant knowledge or experience useful to the project? Who will expect to be in the group? How big do you want or need the group to be? How will you manage the group dynamic and practicalities of bringing them together? How can you identify the right team for your project?
Project execution and delivery		
Requirements specification	A more detailed capture of project expectations, what the project will deliver. The MoSCoW (*Must have*, *Should have*, *Could have*, and *Won't have)* method enables this to be worked through and agreed with stakeholders.	What is essential to the success of your project? What is the minimum viable product? What might you add as a later phase of the project?
Tasks	Specific activities, attributed to an 'owner' who has the necessary skills and knowledge, and who is responsibility for fulfilling the designated task.	Who is best placed to do what for the project? Who has the right experience or expertise? Can the task be outsourced? Do the people you need have time/capacity to contribute what you want?
Milestones	Significant points within the timeframe of the project when specific activities or outputs must be delivered, or when progress needs to be formally reported through the unit or ICS governance structures, or when factors beyond the control of the project can be anticipated having an impact on progress.	What needs to be done when to ensure smooth progress and timely delivery of the project? What is going on elsewhere in the unit or ICS that will impact on or be impacted by the project?

Dependencies	An assessment of the resources, circumstances and expertise without which the project cannot progress, and an analysis of which functions of the unit or ICS might be compromised by failure of the project. This might relate to the overall project, a larger project of which this project is a key component, or of specific tasks, landmarks or phases within this project.	Who or what is essential to the satisfactory completion of the project? Who or what is depending upon key deliverables from this project? What will be the consequences of project failure or delay? Practical, resource, reputation…?
Risk assessment and mitigation	Anything which might impact on the successful completion and delivery of the project should be captured in a risk register which rates each risk with a score reflecting how likely it is to occur and how significant the impact if it does. The risk register also indicates what actions could be put in place to mitigate the risk.	What could go wrong? How disruptive will it be? Will it be financially, practically or reputationally disruptive? What are the risks of not starting or successfully completing the project?
Resources	This section is essential in building a business case	
Time	An estimate of the work time required, and the timeframe within which the project should and/or realistically could be delivered.	When does the project need to deliver? How much time will different elements of the project require? Are there times of year/the business cycle which are more or less favourable for progressing the project?
People	A statement of the staff capacity and expertise required to fulfil the project as specified and within the required timeframe.	Does the unit or ICS have sufficient staff with the relevant skills to deliver the project? Will the project require additional capacity from within or beyond the unit or ICS? What HR/procurement processes need to be followed to secure the necessary staff capacity?
Money	A detailed estimate of the financial resource required to deliver the project, taking account of discrepancies between current and required staff capacity, and current and required technology infrastructure, and the urgency of the project.	Where is the funding coming from? Existing budgets? Dedicated improvement funding? Will the project result in cost savings or ongoing expenditure? Does the funding source influence or inhibit any aspect of the project? Are there other demands on the same pot of funding?

Technology	An assessment of the existing and anticipated infrastructure necessary for the project.	What hardware and software are required to deliver the project? What platforms are already available to/used by the unit or ICS, and can they be exploited for the project? If not, what new/alternative technology is required? What new technology might emerge during the lifetime of the project?
Evaluation	Evaluation is not a bolt-on afterthought to the project. Effective evaluation assesses the viability and effectiveness of the project throughout the project lifecycle. It is therefore really important to understand the starting point and expectations for the project from the outset and at each milestone, so progress can be monitored, and plans adapted mid-cycle.	How do you know the project is on track? How do you know the project is delivering what was intended? What does success look like? Has the project achieved what was intended? More? Less? Something different? More or less useful? What impact has the project had on policy, practice, culture… in the unit or ICS? What could be done better or differently? Is the intended outcome still relevant? What indicators would act as early warnings of failure or delay? What indicators would trigger 'change control' protocols?