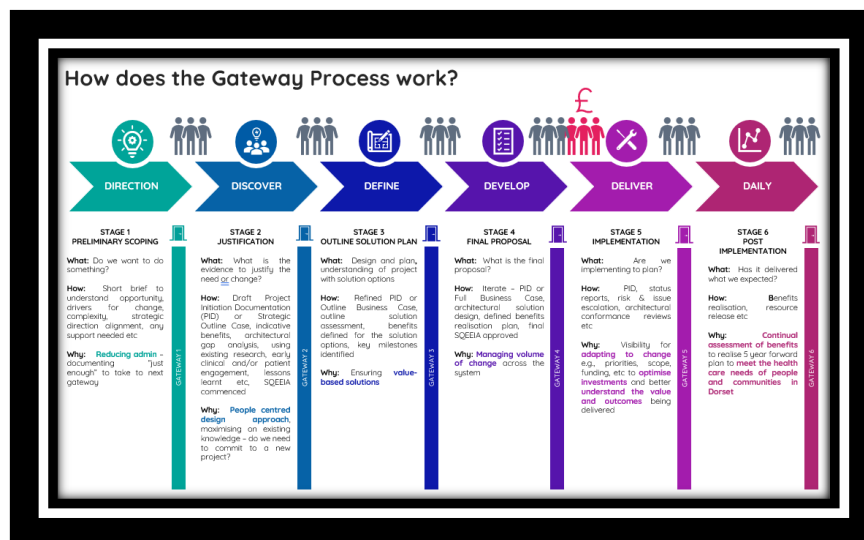


## NHS Dorset Gateway Process

With the transformational impact of our Joint Forward Plan, it is crucial that the initiatives we take on are strategically aligned with our five pillars and make the most of our budget and resources. We need to ensure these changes truly benefit the people and communities of Dorset.

The NHS Dorset Gateway Process helps this by providing a step-by-step approach to managing change and prioritising initiatives, enabling us to make smart, evidence-based decisions while minimising risks.



If you plan to allocate or spend any new funds received during the year, or make changes to existing NHS Dorset funds that exceed £100k, you must follow the Gateway Process. This applies to everything, whether commissioning, de-commissioning, continuous improvement, best value initiatives, proof of concept pilots, projects or programmes of work. By assuring all our commitments through the Gateway Process, we can ensure our finances and resources are used wisely and effectively.

## Which changes are in scope?

### In Scope

1. **Any change** resulting in an anticipated additional investment  $\geq$  £100k<sup>\*1</sup>
2. **Any new funds received in year** (e.g. NHS/Dept Health & Social Care, bids, grants etc)
3. **Service renewals** (with  $\geq$  £100k<sup>\*1</sup> change to specification) – first stage approval only. *Thereafter this follows the ICB Contracting Process*
4. **Best Value initiatives** requiring funding
5. **Decommissioning intention** – first stage approval only
6. **Plans for 'existing' funds in the next financial year** – first stage approval only - prior to agreement of operational plan (i.e. MHIS, demand and capacity)<sup>\*2</sup>

### Out of Scope

#### Managed via Standing Financial Instructions and Detailed Delegation Limits

- Pass through funding<sup>\*3</sup> (e.g. pay awards for providers)
- Changes or continuation to services (with <£100k change)
- Budget/value of change <£100k that:
  - Does not impact an existing contract

*Noting budget owner is accountable for delivering benefits and outcomes of the out-of-scope items.*

*Monthly benefits progress report to be provided to the SPMO*

<sup>\*1</sup> Value per annum (inc VAT), with length of entire term recorded to understand future financial liability).

<sup>\*2</sup> Itemised expenditure included in the approved ICB opening budget paper. Plan must provide sufficient project/benefit detail so that individual items do not need to be submitted individually.

<sup>\*3</sup> Funding is allocated to ICB to pass directly to designated provider, with no decision on spending. Providers manage own governance for the initiative and seek direct SIG approval if necessary.



Please see the FAQs for more detail, but the SPMO team is keen to talk to teams or directorates to explain the process in more detail and answer any additional questions you might have.

Gateway Process Frequently Asked Questions		
<p><b>Q:</b> What is the Gateway Process?</p> <p><b>A:</b> The Gateway Process is a structured, step-by-step approach to managing change and supports effective decision-making. It ensures that risks are minimised, decisions are backed by evidence, and treatments or services remain safe and effective.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> Why do we need a Gateway Process?</p> <p><b>A:</b> The Gateway Process helps ensure the decisions we make provide the best possible value, reduce risk, and align with our strategic goals. In these times of financial deficit, it is more important than ever to make sure every penny counts. The Gateway Process helps demonstrate the value of our investments and prevents us from making poor decisions. This way, we can feel confident that we are making decisions that provide the best value for Dorset.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> How does the Gateway Process work?</p> <p><b>A:</b> The process breaks down initiatives into six key stages or "gates", where recommendations are made about whether to proceed, adjust, or pause. Each gate requires a review of evidence, risks and benefits to ensure we are on track to meet our objectives.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> What do I need to take through the Gateway Process?</p> <p><b>A:</b> If you plan to allocate or spend any new funds received during the gateway, make changes to existing NHS Dorset funds that exceed £100k, you must follow the Gateway Process. This applies to everything, whether commissioning, de-commissioning, continuous improvement, best value initiatives, proof of concept pilots, projects or programmes of work. By assuring all our commitments through the Gateway Process, we can ensure our finances and resources are used wisely and effectively.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> Who is responsible for the Gateway Process?</p> <p><b>A:</b> Everyone managing change has a shared responsibility for following the Gateway Process. However, at each stage of the Gateway Process, the Gateway Assurance Panel is responsible for reviewing every initiative to ensure we are committing to doing the right thing at the right time.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> What is the Gateway Assurance Panel?</p> <p><b>A:</b> This panel is made up of senior leaders from across the organisation who oversee initiatives as they progress through the Gateway Process. Chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive, the panel meets weekly to review each proposed change, ensuring it is well-developed with enough evidence and detail to move forward. They are also responsible for ensuring that initiatives are timely, aligned with ICB priorities, offer value for money, are sustainable, create a positive impact, and have adequate financial and staffing resources.</p>	<p><b>Q:</b> Can the Gateway Assurance Panel make financial decisions?</p> <p><b>A:</b> No. The Gateway Assurance Panel can recommend <u>business</u> initiatives through the all the stages, with the exception of Gateway 4, where finance approval is given. At this point, once the panel has recommended the initiative to move forward, the financial approval is given by a combination of the ICB Senior Leadership Team, the Productivity and Performance Committee, the main ICB Board and the System Investment Group, depending on the value and impact of the initiative.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> What happens if I don't follow the Gateway Process?</p> <p><b>A:</b> The Gateway Process is our mandated process for managing change to ensure every decision is well thought-out, minimising the chances of negative outcomes. Skipping steps or not adhering to the process can lead to poorly informed decisions, increased risk, and potential setbacks or changes cannot proceed without gateway approval.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> Can the Gateway Process be adapted to fit different initiatives?</p> <p><b>A:</b> While the overall structure remains the same, the Gateway Process is flexible and, at the discretion of the Gateway Assurance Panel Chair, it can be scaled depending on the size and complexity of the change. This ensures that all changes benefit from the process, regardless of scope.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> We already have a commissioning cycle, why do we need another process?</p> <p><b>A:</b> Although the Gateway Process and Commissioning Cycle share similarities, they serve very different purposes. The Gateway Process focuses on governance, compliance, and the oversight of all initiatives, to ensure we are meeting our ICB strategic objectives, deliver maximum value, and effectively utilise our resources. By including a Gateway Assurance Panel at the end of each stage of the commissioning cycle, the two processes work together successfully.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> This feels like it is just slowing down change!</p> <p><b>A:</b> The Gateway Process is here to protect us. It ensures that our decisions are evidenced, documented and our investments and services are safe and effective. By doing this, we avoid costly mistakes, delays, or rework by ensuring that decisions are thoroughly evidenced at each stage. This leads to more efficient use of time and resources.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> How do I know when I have reached a "gate" in the process?</p> <p><b>A:</b> Each gateway relates to a specific stage in a change life cycle from Preliminary Scoping, Justification, Outline Solution, Final Proposal, Implementation to Post Implementation. At each gateway, you will receive an Advisory Report confirming that it is either approved to go to the next gateway, or the reasons for non-approval.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> Where can I find more information or support for using the Gateway Process?</p> <p><b>A:</b> The Strategic Portfolio Management Office can provide support, training, tools and templates and are more than happy to answer any additional questions you may have via <a href="mailto:spmo@nhs.uk">spmo@nhs.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Q:</b> What is an Advisory Report?</p> <p><b>A:</b> The Advisory Report is a formal communication you will receive at each gateway that outlines whether your initiative has been recommended to proceed to the next stage, or if it has been declined. If it is not recommended to go to the next stage, the Advisory Report will provide reasons and recommendations for adjustments.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> How long does the Gateway Process take?</p> <p><b>A:</b> The length of the Gateway Process depends on the complexity and scope of the initiative. Each gateway typically requires time for review, evidence collection, and possible adjustments. However, the process is designed to be thorough without unnecessary delay, to ensure well-informed decisions. As the panel meets weekly, it is possible to go from concept to delivery in 5 weeks <a href="https://www.nhs.uk">https://www.nhs.uk</a> the initiative meets the minimum requirements for evidence and compliance.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> What if my initiative is urgent?</p> <p><b>A:</b> In cases where an initiative is time-sensitive, it may be possible to expedite the Gateway, but only with the approval of the Gateway Assurance Panel Chair. However, even in urgent cases, the initiative must still meet the minimum requirements for evidence, compliance, and governance to ensure that the project remains safe and effective.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> What is happening to the Fast Track Panel?</p> <p><b>A:</b> Once the Gateway Assurance Panels are implemented on a weekly basis, the Fast Track Panel will be <u>discontinued</u> and all initiatives will go through the Gateway Assurance Panel.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> What happens if my initiative is declined?</p> <p><b>A:</b> The Advisory Report will provide reasons and recommendations for adjustments and when completed, the initiative can be re-submitted to the Gateway Assurance Panel. All declined initiatives will be periodically reviewed by the panel to ascertain if they can be re-submitted due to a change in strategic direction, financial circumstances etc.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> How do I book onto the Gateway Assurance Panel?</p> <p><b>A:</b> Each initiative needs to have a <u>Project Proposal</u> and <u>Capability Assessment</u> completed, which then needs to be emailed to <a href="mailto:spmo@nhs.uk">spmo@nhs.uk</a>. You will then be added to the next available agenda slot and the papers circulated to the Gateway Assurance Panel one week prior to the meeting.</p>

If you think this would be helpful, feel free to contact us [@SPMO \(NHS Dorset\)](mailto:spmo@nhs.uk)

## SPMO - Who we are:

### STRATEGIC PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT OFFICE



**KERRY JALIE**  
Strategic Portfolio Manager

After three decades in the private sector, Kerry transitioned to the NHS in 2021, bringing a wealth of knowledge and a fresh perspective to the healthcare landscape for project, programme and change management.

Currently heading the Strategic Portfolio Management Office (SPMO), Kerry is dedicated to fostering an environment where projects succeed in delivering the best possible outcomes for Dorset.



**MADDIE SAUTTER**  
SPMO Lead

Maddie is an expert in optimising the value of initiatives by ensuring that projects and programmes deliver measurable benefits, aligned to strategic goals.

With a strong background in project and benefits management, Maddie specialises in working closely with stakeholders to set clear benefit realisation targets by identifying, tracking and assessing the ongoing progress towards achieving maximum positive impacts of the investments.



**CHRIS HOLMAN**  
SPMO Reporting Lead

Chris is instrumental in turning complex data into actionable insights that drive informed decision-making across the organisation.

With a strong background in data analysis, reporting and business intelligence, Chris is responsible for managing and delivering comprehensive reports that keep leadership teams informed and aligned with strategic goals.




**CARA CROSS**  
SPMO Project Support Officer

Cara provides essential administrative and operational assistance to the team, ensuring documentation is maintained and is readily available.

Cara also focuses on coordinating and hosting training for staff and partners across the ICS for both the Project Management Lite (PM Lite) course for new or staff who require refresher training in project management, as well as providing training for our project management software.


## SPMO - What we do:

### Strategic Portfolio Management Office




**Benefits Management**

We help teams track, measure, and monitor the impact of their change through a comprehensive benefits management framework, maximising value and outcomes




**Training**

We offer training to empower teams with the skills they need to manage change effectively and confidently e.g., Celoxis, PM Lite, benefits realisation and risk management



**Gateway Process**

Ensuring the smooth management of the change pipeline across NHS Dorset, enabling efficient decision-making and prioritisation of key initiatives



**Tools and Templates**

Our suite of standardised tools and templates simplifies change management, ensuring consistent application and success

