



## Regularity audit of the BARST project

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**Date of meeting** 23 February 2024

**Date of report** 1 February 2024

### Report by Chief Executive

#### 1. Object of report

To advise the committee on the findings of a regularity audit of the Bus Administration and Reporting Systems Transformation (BARST) project. This engagement was included in the annual Internal Audit plan 2023/2024.

#### 2. Background to report

Bus Strategy & Delivery has a range of operational responsibilities including, Bus Network planning; support of socially necessary bus services; bus infrastructure services on behalf of partner authorities; co-ordination of Schools Transport on behalf of eleven councils; and MyBus (demand responsive transport service).

An internal Bus Administration and Reporting System Transformation (BARST) programme has been set up to address information system requirements for Bus services through collaboration of Bus Strategy & Delivery, Digital and the Projects programme management office.

The BARST programme seeks to enable bus administration processes and databases to migrate to new digital infrastructure, as outlined in the Digital Strategy 2024-2027.

The objective of this engagement was to assess and evaluate the Bus Administration and Reporting Systems Transformation (BARST) project, to date.

This engagement tested elements of the internal controls and mitigation against SPT 7: loss of digital infrastructure services, as identified in the Corporate Risk register.

#### 3. Outline of proposals

To date, the BARST programme has designed, developed and rolled-out a new Schools Transport digital product to partner authorities.

In addition, new digital modules for Quality Assurance Inspections and Disclosure compliance covering a variety of subsidised contracts and contracts managed and maintained within the School Transport agency agreements, have also been designed, developed and rolled-out.

A new suite of bus information displays at Buchanan bus station has also been rolled-out as part of this project.

Engagement testing found that initial project milestones timelines have been extended due to competing demand for digital resources, methodology used to deliver project and staff turnover.

Engagement testing identified a requirement to review governance arrangements including the programme plan and monitoring together with improved risk management, metrics and reporting on outcomes and deliverables.

There are areas for improvement which are addressed by recommendations which can be found at Appendix 1. The BARST programme steering group and project management have agreed to implement the recommendations, which is currently being actioned.

Key controls exist and are applied consistently and effectively in the majority of areas tested in this engagement.

Reasonable assurance can be taken from the internal controls in place.

#### 4. Committee action

The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and agree that the Audit and Assurance Manager submits a follow-up report on the implementation of the recommendations to the next meeting.

#### 5. Consequences

Policy consequences	<i>None.</i>
Legal consequences	<i>None.</i>
Financial consequences	<i>None.</i>
Personnel consequences	<i>None.</i>
Equalities consequences	<i>None.</i>
Risk consequences	<i>As detailed in the report.</i>
Climate Change, Adaptation & Carbon consequences	<i>None.</i>

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**Title** **Director of Finance & Corporate Support**

**Name** Valerie Davidson  
**Title** **Chief Executive**

For further information, please contact *Iain McNicol*, Audit and Assurance manager on 0141 333 3195.

**APPENDIX 1  
Audit & Standards committee – 23 February 2024**

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The recommendation from this engagement is listed in the following table. The priorities are defined as follows:

- High:** A fundamental control that should be addressed as soon as possible;
- Medium:** An important control that should be addressed within three months;
- Low:** An issue which is not fundamental but should be addressed within six months to improve the overall control environment.

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Action Proposed	Lead Officer	Due date
1	<p><u>Delivery model</u></p> <p>Project programme management should consider options for delivery of the BARST project.</p> <p>A strategic and operational evaluation criterion should be used, building in whole life costs.</p> <p>A risk evaluation should be carried out including budget, design, and schedule of the project.</p>	Medium	<p>Options are actively being considered with the programme steering group.</p> <p>Evaluation criteria including risks are being considered by the programme steering group.</p>	BARST programme steering group	March 2024

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Action Proposed	Lead Officer	Due date
2	<p><u>Project planning</u></p> <p>The Programme Manager should ensure that the BARST programme plan(s) is kept up to date.</p> <p>The project plan is the primary communication tool used by the project manager and provides a baseline direction to all stakeholders, while also keeping everyone accountable.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> the risk of a non-current plan can introduce project creep, low performance, high costs, time risk and unresolved conflicts.</p>	Medium	The BARST programme plan is currently being updated with enhanced performance reporting.	Interim Head of Corporate Programme Assurance	March 2024

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Action Proposed	Lead Officer	Due date
3	<p><u>Governance structure</u></p> <p>The Programme steering group should review the following issues regarding the governance structure of the BARST project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clearly allocated roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders involved in the BARST project;</li> <li>• clarity of the role of business product owner (distinct from the Head of Bus Strategy &amp; Delivery);</li> <li>• clear communication channels between all stakeholders;</li> <li>• use of enterprise-wide project management software to keep track of project progress;</li> <li>• prioritise governance goals to reduce complexity, confusion, and conflict;</li> <li>• compliance with regulations and standards;</li> <li>• building scope and risk management plans and process;</li> <li>• map business goals into actions and measures that deliver the goals; and</li> <li>• outcomes and deliverables.</li> </ul>	Medium	The Governance structure for the BARST project will be reviewed and refreshed.	BARST programme steering group	March 2024

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Action Proposed	Lead Officer	Due date
4	<p><u>Performance reporting</u></p> <p>The Programme manager should consider developing a performance dashboard to assist with visibility and monitoring of resources.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> It may be beneficial to obtain independent external expert advice in relation to digital developer processes and outputs (to enhance assurance arrangements).</p>	Medium	The BARST programme plan will be reviewed to enhance current performance reporting with consideration to developing a performance dashboard to assist with visibility and monitoring of resources.	Interim Head of Corporate Programme Assurance	March 2024
5	<p><u>User Acceptance Testing and Scalability</u></p> <p>The Programme steering group should review arrangements for user acceptance testing for the BARST project modules including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope, objectives and the testing criteria;</li> <li>• Test plan methodology and test cases;</li> <li>• Test environment;</li> <li>• Test data and scenarios to validate software;</li> <li>• Defect management: Identify, track, and manage defects found during testing process;</li> <li>• reporting of summary of results and how defects were addressed;</li> <li>• Scalability of solution.</li> </ul>	Medium	The Programme steering group will review arrangements for user acceptance testing, outcomes and scalability.	BARST programme steering group	March 2024