



Applied Leadership and Management in the Workplace
Module Assignment Submission

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Introduction

Project management provides a structured approach to transforming organisational needs into defined and measurable outcomes through the coordination of resources, activities, and stakeholders. Although project success has traditionally been associated with the management of time, cost and quality, contemporary understanding extends beyond these constraints to consider stakeholder expectations and the wider value generated by a project. Pollack et al (2018)

The application of project management within small businesses requires consideration. Turner and Ledwith (2016) found that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) benefit from project management practices adapted to organisational size and need, while excessive bureaucracy can restrict their effective use. This is relevant to the current project, which considers the planned transition of a small independent hair salon from a paper appointment diary to a digital booking and customer management system.

Digitalisation should not be viewed as beneficial solely because it introduces new technology. Hermann *et al* (2024) Hermann et al (2024) demonstrate that SME digital transformation projects require consideration of why change is necessary, what will be transformed and how implementation will be achieved. Consequently, this report will critically evaluate the proposed project across its lifecycle, considering its business and financial justification, methodology, stakeholders, planning and scheduling, communication, risk, implementation, monitoring and closure. The suitability of the project management tools applied will also be evaluated in relation to the limited resources and operational requirements of a small salon.

Business Background and Project Rationale

The business is a small independent hair salon comprising an owner manager, one fully qualified stylist, and an apprentice. Appointments are currently managed using a paper diary. Although this approach is inexpensive and familiar to staff, it relies on manual administration and limits customer ability to manage appointments independently. The proposed project will therefore explore the implementation of a digital booking and customer management system.

The rationale for the project extends beyond replacing paper with technology. Digital transformation can improve business processes and support organisational efficiency. However, SMEs often experience constraints relating to financial resources, digital capabilities, and employee readiness. Kallmuenzer et al (2024) These considerations are particularly relevant to a three-person salon, where time spent implementing or learning a

new system may directly affect service delivery. Therefore, the anticipated benefits must be sufficient to justify both financial investment and operational disruption.

Digital appointment management may provide customers with greater flexibility while reducing reliance on staff being available to access the physical diary. Evidence suggests that the design and management of appointment booking systems can influence capacity utilisation, demonstrating that booking processes have operational as well as administrative implications. Liu et al (2019) Nevertheless, digital adoption should not automatically be equated with improved performance. For SMEs, successful transformation depends on factors including technological suitability, organisational capabilities, and effective implementation. Hermann *et al* (2024)

Consequently, the project will assess potential benefits, including improved booking accessibility, reduced administration and more effective appointment management, outweigh implementation costs, training requirements, and associated risks. This provides a clear business rationale for applying structured but proportionate project management techniques before committing limited salon resources to the proposed change.

Project Aim, SMART Objectives, Scope and Success Criteria

Clearly defined objectives and project boundaries provide a basis for planning, controlling, and subsequently evaluating project performance. Poorly defined scope can contribute to project difficulties because uncertainty over what is included may affect cost, scheduling, and stakeholder expectations. Mirza et al (2013)

The project's aim is to plan and implement a suitable digital booking and customer management system that improves appointment management within the salon while remaining affordable and appropriate for a three-person business.

The SMART objective is to select, configure, test, and implement the system within 12 weeks and within the approved project budget, ensuring that all three employees are trained before launching. During the first three months of operation, customer uptake, staff adoption, appointment management efficiency and financial performance will be reviewed to determine whether the intended benefits are being realised.

The project scope includes requirements identification, system selection and configuration, budgeting, transfer of relevant customer information, staff training, testing, customer communication, implementation and post launch evaluation. Wider salon refurbishment, recruitment and unrelated changes to existing services are excluded.

Clearly establishing these boundaries is important because effective scope definition clarifies what the project is expected to deliver and can reduce uncontrolled expansion during implementation. Mirza *et al* (2013) The principal deliverables are a configured digital booking system, transferred customer information, trained employees, customer communication, and successful system implementation within the agreed twelve-week timeframe. These deliverables, together with the project's constraints and success measures, are formalised within the Project Charter and provide a baseline against which project performance can subsequently be monitored. Appendix A1 presents the Project Charter developed for the salon's digital system project, outlining its purpose, scope, key deliverables, responsibility, and success criteria.

Success will not be defined solely by completing implementation within time and budget. Atkinson (1999) argues that traditional time, cost, and quality measures provide an incomplete assessment of project success, while Serra and Kunc (2015) distinguish project management efficiency from the wider benefits created for an organisation. Therefore, success criteria for the salon will include delivery within the agreed timeframe and budget, successful staff adoption, reliable operation, customer uptake and evidence that the system creates sufficient operational and financial value to justify its continued use.

Project Planning and Management

Business Case, Environmental Analysis and Justification

A business case should establish whether the proposed change is sufficiently valuable and feasible to justify committing business resources. This is particularly important for the salon because its small workforce and limited resources mean that expenditure on technology, training and implementation must produce benefits that are meaningful to the business. Benefit realisation research indicates that project success should incorporate the value created for the business rather than focusing exclusively on whether an output has been delivered. Serra and Kunc (2015)

The business case was also informed by PESTLE and SWOT analysis to consider the project within the salon's wider operating environment. PESTLE provides a structured perspective for examining external influences that may affect strategic decision-making. Waddock (2025) For the salon, economic, technological, social and legal factors were particularly relevant, including recurring software costs, customer expectations for convenient booking, reliance on digital technology and responsibilities associated with customer information. SWOT complemented this external analysis by considering internal strengths and weaknesses alongside external opportunities and threats. SWOT has an established role within organisational planning, although its value depends upon using identified

factors to support subsequent strategic decisions rather than treating the analysis as an isolated exercise. Benzaghta *et al* (2023) For the salon, operational knowledge, established customer relationships and close team communication represented strengths, while limited resources and digital implementation experience represented weaknesses. Opportunities included improved booking accessibility and administrative efficiency, whereas system failure, low customer adoption and recurring supplier costs represented threats. These findings subsequently informed financial, stakeholder, and risk-management decisions within the project.

The proposed digital booking system addresses limitations associated with the salon paper diary by creating the potential for customers to manage appointments without requiring staff to access the diary manually. Expected benefits include increased booking accessibility, reduced administrative activity, automated appointment reminders, and improved visibility of appointment availability. However, these benefits should not be treated as guaranteed financial returns. The business case must distinguish between project outputs, such as an operational booking system, and business benefits, such as improved efficiency or reduced lost appointment capacity. Serra and Kunc (2015) demonstrate that benefit realisation practices are positively associated with the creation of strategic organisational value, supporting the need to evaluate outcomes after implementation.

Financial appraisal will therefore consider both initial and recurring expenditure. Initial costs may include system configuration, staff training, data preparation, customer communication, and any required hardware, while recurring expenditure may include software subscriptions and transaction charges. A contingency allowance will also be incorporated to recognise uncertainty within the initial estimates. A detailed project budget developed for the salon digital booking project, including estimated implementation costs, recurring expenditure and contingency, is presented in Appendix B1.

Cost benefit analysis (CBA) provides a structured means of comparing project costs with anticipated benefits and has a long-established role in project evaluation. Diewert (1983) For the salon, quantifiable benefits could include administrative time saved and reductions in revenue lost through avoidable appointment gaps. Nevertheless, CBA has limitations because not every project outcome can be reliably expressed in monetary terms. Therefore, benefits such as customer convenience, improved information availability, and staff experience should be considered alongside, rather than artificially converted into financial values. The CBA and estimated payback calculation developed for the salon's digital system are presented in Appendix B2.

The business case will consequently consider budgeted cost, anticipated financial benefit, net benefit and estimated payback period, alongside non-financial success measures. This provides a more balanced basis for determining whether implementation represents worthwhile investment for the salon. Importantly, project approval should depend on evidence that the system has the potential to create sustainable business value rather than simply demonstrating that the salon can afford the initial expenditure.

Project Management Methodology

Selecting an appropriate project management methodology is important because different approaches provide varying levels of structure, flexibility, and stakeholder involvement. Traditional approaches generally emphasise defined requirements, advance planning and sequential control, whereas Agile approaches encourage iterative development and responsiveness to emerging requirements. Conforto *et al* (2014) found evidence that Agile practices can extend beyond software development, although their applicability depends upon the organisational and project environment.

A predominantly traditional approach would provide several advantages for the salon. The project has a defined twelve-week timeframe, limited budget, and identifiable activities including system selection, configuration, training, testing, and launch. Establishing these requirements in advance would support scheduling and financial control. However, applying a highly formal methodology to a three-person business could create unnecessary administration. Turner and Ledwith (2016) found that SMEs tend to require more informal, people focused, project management practices and identified bureaucracy and overhead as significant barriers to adoption.

Conversely, a purely Agile approach would enable staff feedback to influence system configuration and allow improvements to be made following testing. Nevertheless, complete flexibility would be inappropriate where expenditure, deadlines, and core deliverables require control. A hybrid approach is therefore proposed, combining predictive planning for scope, budget, milestones, and the implementation schedule with iterative testing, employee feedback, and post launch improvement. Evidence from 477 cross industry projects found hybrid approaches comparable with Agile in effectiveness and capable of achieving similar time, budget, scope and quality outcomes while supporting stakeholder success. Gemino *et al* (2020)

For the salon, this combination provides structure without introducing disproportionate bureaucracy. The methodology can therefore respond to feedback while maintaining control over the financial and operational constraints established within the Project Charter. The hybrid project lifecycle developed for the salon's digital booking project is

illustrated in Appendix A2, demonstrating how structured planning is combined with iterative testing, feedback, and refinement.

Stakeholder Analysis and Engagement

Stakeholder management is important because project success can be interpreted differently by those affected by, involved in, or responsible for implementation. Davis (2014) found that perceptions of project success vary between stakeholder groups, demonstrating that successful delivery cannot be assessed solely from the project manager's perspective. For the salon project, the principal stakeholders include the owner, stylist, apprentice, customers, and digital system provider, each of whom has different interests in the proposed change.

A Power Interest Matrix will be used to prioritise engagement. The owner requires close management because they hold responsibility for project approval, expenditure, and operational outcomes. The stylist and apprentice have less decision-making authority but high interest because the system will directly affect their daily working practices. Customers also require active engagement because adoption of digital booking influences whether anticipated benefits are realised, while the software provider has considerable influence during configuration, implementation, and technical support. A Power Interest Matrix adapted specifically to the salon's stakeholders is presented in Appendix C1. Research demonstrates the usefulness of power interest mapping while also indicating that stakeholder positions may change throughout the project lifecycle. ElWakeel and Andersen (2019)

Power and interest alone may nevertheless oversimplify a stakeholder's importance. Mitchell et al (1997) proposes the Stakeholder Salience Model, which evaluates stakeholders according to power, legitimacy, and urgency. Applying this additional perspective is valuable because customers may possess limited formal power individually but have legitimate and potentially urgent concerns relating to accessibility, booking reliability and personal information. The application of stakeholder salience to the salon digital booking project is presented in Appendix C2, providing further assessment of stakeholder priority based on power, legitimacy and urgency.

Using the two approaches together provides a stronger basis for engagement than relying upon a single static classification. However, stakeholder analysis will require review during implementation because influence, interest, and urgency may change as the project progresses. This is particularly important around system testing and launch, when staff and customer concerns may become more immediate.

Work Breakdown Structure, Scheduling and Critical Pathway Analysis

Effective scheduling requires the project's scope to be translated into manageable activities. A Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) supports this by decomposing the overall project into smaller work packages that can subsequently inform scheduling, resource allocation, and control. Servello and Evans (2002) For the salon, the project is divided into six workstreams, initiation, system selection, preparation and configuration, training and testing, implementation, and post launch evaluation. The WBS developed for the salon digital booking project is presented in Appendix A3, illustrating the decomposition of the project into manageable work activities.

The WBS provides the foundation for developing the project schedule because activities must be identified, sequenced, and assigned realistic durations before progress can be monitored effectively. These activities are translated into a twelve-week Gantt chart enabling the owner to identify when activities occur, where tasks overlap and when key milestones should be achieved. Gantt charts provide a useful visual representation of time and activity. However, Ballesteros-Pérez et al (2018) cautions against their uncritical application because they cannot adequately represent every dimension of project complexity. For this project, the Gantt chart is therefore used as a practical scheduling and communication tool rather than as the sole mechanism for project control, with the twelve-week project schedule presented in Appendix A4.

To strengthen schedule analysis, Critical Path Analysis (CPA) will identify the sequence of dependent activities that determine the minimum project duration. Critical path methods incorporate activity sequence and duration to support planning and coordination. Kelley (1961) The Critical Path Analysis (CPA) for the salon digital booking project is presented in Appendix A5, identifying the sequence of dependent activities that determine the project duration. Activities on the critical path require closer monitoring because delays to activities with no available float may affect the planned implementation date.

Using the WBS, Gantt chart and CPA together therefore provide greater insight than applying any one tool independently. The WBS establishes what must be delivered. The Gantt chart communicates when work is planned, and CPA identifies which activities are most time sensitive. Nevertheless, schedule estimates remain forecasts and will require monitoring as implementation progresses.

Communication and Responsibility Management

Effective project communication supports coordination by ensuring that stakeholders receive appropriate information at relevant stages of the project. Communication should not follow a uniform approach because stakeholder information needs can change across

the project's lifecycle. Turkulainen et al (2015) found that communication practices vary according to stakeholder salience and project phase, supporting a targeted rather than standardised approach.

For the salon, communication needs to remain proportionate to the small project team. The owner will require regular oversight of cost, schedule, risks, and progress, while the stylist and apprentice require clear information regarding training, testing, and changes to booking procedures. Customers will primarily require communication before implementation explaining how the new booking option operates, while the system provider will require more detailed communication during configuration, testing, and technical support. The Communication Plan developed for the salon digital booking project is presented in Appendix D2, outlining the information requirements, communication methods, and frequency of engagement for key stakeholders. Targeting communication according to stakeholder needs is preferable to a 'one-size-fits-all' approach because stakeholders differ in their expectations and influence. Bourne (2016)

Communication alone does not establish accountability. Brower et al (2020) RACI can reduce misunderstanding and duplication by making individual responsibilities visible. The RACI matrix developed for the salon digital booking project is presented in Appendix D1, clarifying responsibility and accountability across the owner, stylist, apprentice and system provider.

For this project, the owner will remain accountable for major decisions including expenditure, system selection, and implementation approval, while responsibilities for testing and training can be shared. This distinction is important because unclear responsibility and authority can weaken effective project control. Robins (1993) Nevertheless, excessive formal communication would be disproportionate for a threeperson salon. The communication and responsibility arrangements will therefore provide sufficient clarity and accountability without creating unnecessary administrative burden.

Risk Management

Risk management is necessary because uncertainty can affect project cost, timescale, quality, and achievement of intended benefits. Evidence suggests that effective risk management practices can positively influence project performance, although successful application also depends on organisational and interpersonal capabilities. Carvalho and Junior (2014)

For the salon, significant risks include staff resistance, inadequate training, data transfer errors, system failure, implementation delays, increased costs, and low customer adoption. Data privacy also requires consideration because transitioning from a paper diary to a digital system change how customer information is stored and accessed. The Project Risk Register developed for the salon digital booking project is presented in Appendix E1, identifying each risk alongside its likelihood, impact, mitigation response and ownership.

Their relative significance is further illustrated through the 5×5 Probability–Impact Matrix presented in Appendix E2, enabling higher-priority risks to be identified and prioritised for management attention.

However, risk scoring should not replace managerial judgement. Cox (2008) identifies limitations in conventional risk matrices, including subjective categorisation and the possibility that qualitatively different risks may receive misleading rankings. Therefore, the salon's risk matrix will provide a practical prioritisation tool rather than an objective prediction of future events. Risk assessments will be reviewed during implementation as the likelihood or potential impact of individual threats may change.

Implementation, Monitoring and Control

Effective implementation requires planned activities to be monitored against agreed baselines so that deviations can be identified, and corrective action taken where necessary. Project control therefore extends beyond recording progress. It supports management decisions by comparing actual performance with planned cost, schedule, and outcomes. Hazir (2015) For the salon, monitoring should remain proportionate to the project's scale rather than introducing complex control systems that create unnecessary administrative work.

Progress will be reviewed against the twelve-week Gantt schedule, approved budget, agreed scope, and risk register. Key performance indicators (KPI's) will include milestone completion, expenditure against budget, completion of staff training and resolution of testing issues. Following implementation, measures will extend to customer uptake, booking system reliability, administrative time saved, and appointment management efficiency. Evidence suggests that monitoring and KPI mechanisms are positively associated with project success, although their usefulness varies across stages of the project lifecycle. Young et al (2019) The KPI Monitoring Framework developed for the salon digital booking project is presented in Appendix E3, linking each KPI to its target, review point and responsible person.

Monitoring must also lead to action. Where performance moves outside agreed tolerances, the owner will determine whether corrective action or formal change is required. Changes affecting scope, cost or the twelve-week deadline will be assessed against the Project Charter before approval, reducing the risk of uncontrolled scope expansion. Although more sophisticated approaches such as Earned Value Management can integrate cost and schedule performance, their administrative requirements may be disproportionate for this small project. Anbari (2003) Consequently, simple milestone, budget, risk and benefit tracking provides a more appropriate control mechanism for the salon while retaining sufficient information to support evidence-based decisions.

Project Closure and Evaluation

Critical Reflection on Project Management

Planning the salon's digital booking project demonstrates that effective project management requires both technical and interpersonal capability. The project manager's existing operational knowledge represents a strength because familiarity with salon processes supports understanding customer expectations, resource limitations, and the practical impact of organisational change. However, familiarity may also create potential bias where decisions are influenced by experience rather than objective evidence. The planning process therefore demonstrates the importance of combining professional judgement with structured project-management tools and evidence-based decision-making.

Leadership and communication represent further strengths because implementation requires engagement with the stylist and apprentice while maintaining normal salon operations. Project manager competencies, including communication, leadership and interpersonal skills, have been associated with successful project outcomes. Ochoa Pacheco *et al* (2023) However, the small size of the team creates a potential reliance on informal communication. Although this may enable rapid discussion, insufficient formalisation could result in unclear responsibilities or overlooked concerns. Developing the Communication Plan and RACI matrix therefore demonstrates the value of introducing sufficient structure without creating unnecessary bureaucracy.

The self-assessment also identifies financial appraisal, digital implementation, and formal risk management as areas requiring further development. Operational management experience alone does not necessarily provide the analytical capability required to evaluate investment, contingency, payback, and project risk. This is significant because project

management competence incorporates multiple technical, managerial, leadership, communication, and methodological capabilities. Dajić et al (2024)

Consequently, further development in these areas would strengthen the project manager's ability to make evidence-based decisions and respond effectively to uncertainty.

Overall, the evaluation identifies strengths in operational knowledge, customer awareness, and team communication, alongside development needs in financial analysis, digital implementation, and structured risk control. These findings are reflected in the Project Management Skills Self-Audit presented in Appendix F1 and inform the targeted development actions set out in the Personal Development Plan in Appendix F2.

Personal Development Plan

The self-assessment identifies targeted professional development as necessary to strengthen future project management capability. Development priorities include financial appraisal, digital project implementation, and structured risk management, while existing strengths in communication and operational leadership should continue to be developed. Professional development is most effective when learning is connected to workplace practice rather than treated solely as knowledge acquisition; experiential learning enables knowledge to develop through the interaction between experience, reflection and subsequent action (Kolb, 1984).

For the project manager, development should therefore combine formal learning with practical application. Financial capability can be strengthened through further training in budgeting and CBA, while digital competence can be developed through direct involvement in system configuration and implementation. Risk management capability should be improved through regular application and review of the project's risk register. These priorities are translated into measurable actions, timescales, and success indicators within the Personal Development Plan shown in Appendix F2. This creates a basis for reviewing whether identified development needs have resulted in improved project-management capability rather than simply recording areas for improvement.

Conclusion

This report has demonstrated that implementing a digital booking and customer management system represents a viable improvement project for the salon, if implementation remains proportionate to the scale and resources of the business. Moving from a paper diary has the potential to improve booking accessibility, reduce administrative demands and strengthen appointment management; however, these benefits should not

be assumed. The decision to proceed should remain dependent upon financial feasibility, effective staff adoption, and evidence that anticipated benefits can be realised.

The analysis indicates that a hybrid project management approach is most appropriate, combining structured control of scope, cost, schedule, and risk with flexibility during configuration, testing and implementation. The integrated use of stakeholder analysis, WBS, Gantt scheduling, Critical Path Analysis, RACI, financial appraisal and risk management provides a structured basis for delivery, while the supporting appendices demonstrate how these techniques have been adapted to the operational requirements of the salon.

Importantly, project success extends beyond installing the system within twelve weeks and budget. Evaluation should also consider staff and customer adoption, operational efficiency, and longer-term financial value. Finally, the project highlights the importance of developing financial, digital, and risk-management capabilities alongside existing operational and communication strengths. Effective project management within a small salon therefore requires greater complexity, but the selective and evidence-based application of appropriate tools to achieve measurable business value.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Project Planning and Scheduling A1 -Project Charter

Charter Element	Salon Specific Project Detail
Business Context	Small independent hair salon consisting of an owner, one fully qualified stylist, and one apprentice. Appointments are currently managed using a paper diary.
Project Purpose	To replace reliance on the paper diary with an appropriate digital booking and customer-management system.
Project Sponsor	Salon Owner.
Project Manager	Salon Owner.
Project Team	Owner, stylist and apprentice, supported by the selected system provider
Project Aim	To improve appointment management and booking accessibility through implementation of a financially sustainable digital system appropriate to the salon's size.
SMART Objectives	Select, configure, test and implement the system within 12 weeks and the approved budget, with all three employees trained before launch.
Key Deliverables	Selected system, configured booking platform, relevant customer information transferred, staff training completed, testing completed, customer communication issued, system launched, post implementation review completed.
In Scope	Requirement identification, system selection, budgeting, configuration, relevant data transfer, training, testing, customer communication, implementation and evaluation.
Out of Scope	Salon refurbishment, additional recruitment, changes to existing salon services, and unrelated digital transformation.
Time Constraints	Twelve-week implementation period.
Resource Constraints	Three-person workforce, implementation activities must minimise disruption to normal salon operations.
Financial Constraints	Delivery within approved project budget and contingency, financial assumptions assessed in Appendix B.
Key Stakeholders	Owner, stylist, apprentice, customers and digital system provider.
Initial Key risks	Staff resistance, inadequate training, implementation delay, system failure, data transfer errors, data protection issues, cost increases, and low customer adoption.

Success Criteria	Delivery within time and budget, all staff trained, reliable system operation, staff adoption, customer uptake, improved appointment management efficiency, evidence of reasonable financial value.
Authorisation	Project proceeds following confirmation of operational and financial feasibility.

A2 – Hybrid Project Lifecycle

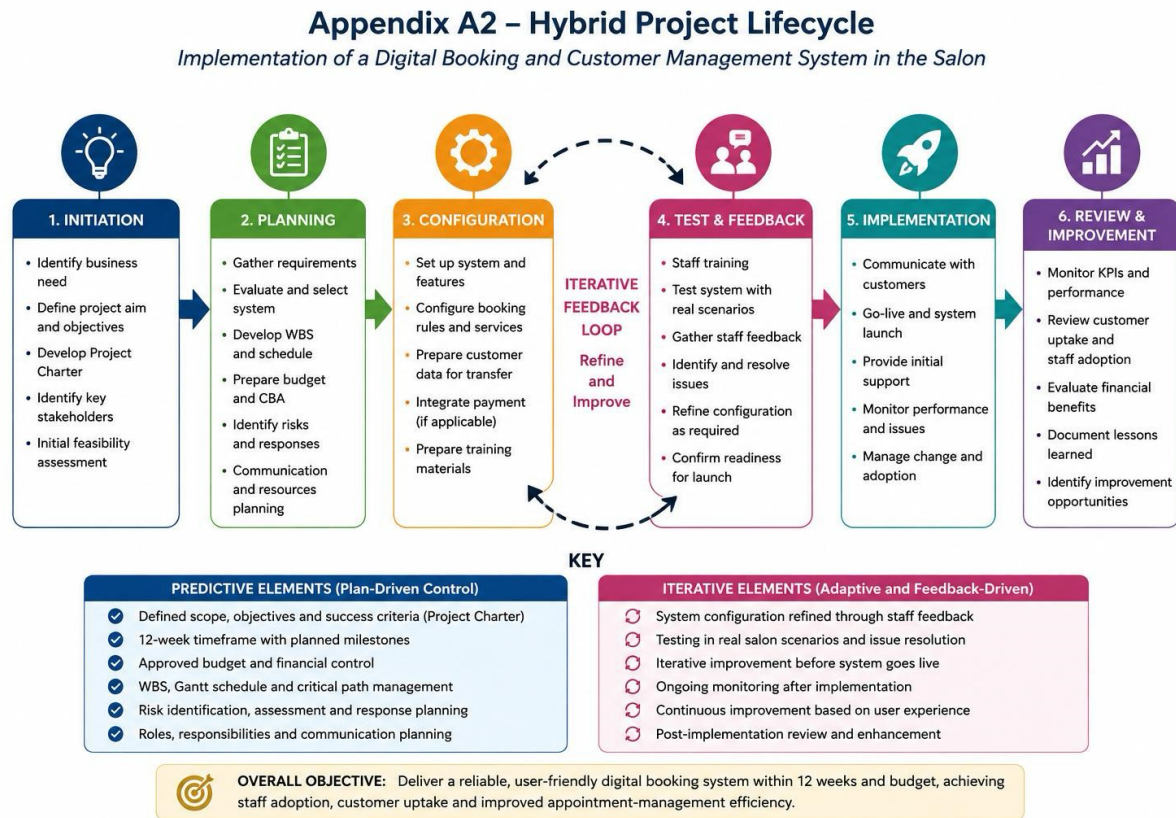


Diagram created by the author using ChatGPT (OpenAI, 2026), based on the 12-week project schedule developed for the salon booking system implementation.

A3 – Work Breakdown Structure

Digital Booking and Customer Management System Implementation The
six main branches:

1.0 Prepare for the Salon Change

1. Review problems associated with the existing paper diary
2. Identify what the salon needs from a digital system
3. Discuss Requirements with the stylist and apprentice
4. Establish project budget and twelve-week timeframe
5. Confirm Project Charter and approval to proceed

2.0 Select the Booking System

1. Identify suitable systems for a small hair salon
2. Compare subscription and transaction costs
3. Compare online booking, reminder and customer record functions
4. Consider ease of use for the three members of staff
5. Select and purchase the preferred system

3.0 Set up the Salon System

1. Add Salon Opening hours
2. Add Hair Services and Prices
3. Enter service durations
4. Create profiles for the owner, stylist and apprentice
5. Set Individual working hours and availability
6. Prepare and transfer relevant existing customer information
7. Configure booking confirmations and appointment reminders

4.0 Staff Training and Trial Bookings

1. Owner completes system training
2. Train stylist and apprentice
3. Complete trial bookings
4. Test cancellations and appointment changes
5. Test customer reminders
6. Gather feedback from three staff members
7. Correct problems before launch

5.0 Introduce Digital Booking to Customers

1. Prepare customer information explaining the new booking option
2. Inform existing customers during salon visits
3. Promote digital booking through the salon's customer communication channels
4. Complete final system check
5. Launch online booking
6. Maintain the paper diary temporarily during transition, if required
7. Monitor booking problems and provide staff support

6.0 Review the Change

1. Review staff use of the system
2. Review customer uptake on online booking
3. Compare administrative demands with the previous paper diary process
4. Review appointment gaps/cancellations
5. Compare actual project expenditure against budget
6. Review emerging financial and operational benefits
7. Record lessons learned and required improvements

A4 – Gantt Chart for the Salon Digital booking and Customer Management Project

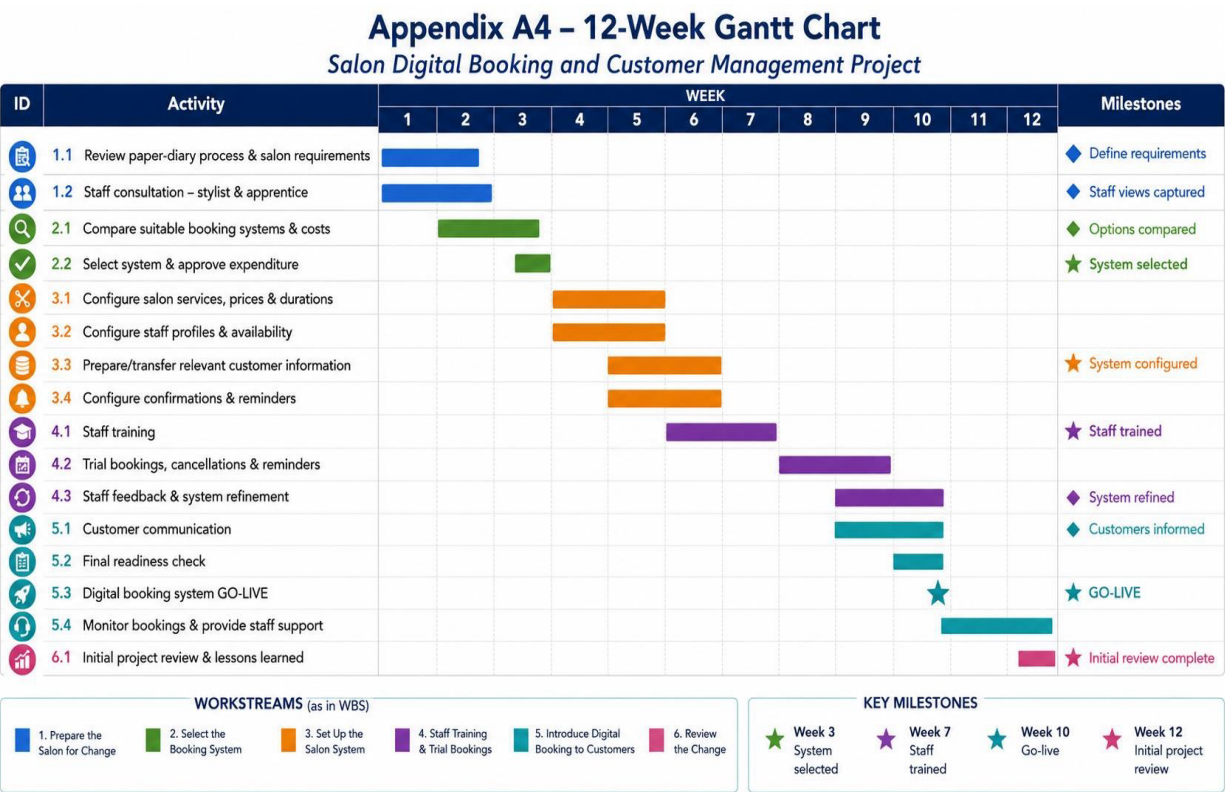


Diagram created by the author using ChatGPT (OpenAI, 2026), based on the 12-week project schedule developed for the salon booking system implementation.

A5 – Critical Path Analysis

A5.1 - Critical Path Activity and Dependency Analysis

ID	Activity	Duration (weeks)	Depends on	Float
A	Review paper diary and establish salon requirements	2	—	0
B	Compare booking and systems costs	1	A	0
C	Select system and approve expenditure	1	B	0
D	Configure salon services and staff profiles	2	C	0
E	Prepare customer information and booking functions	1	D	0
F	Complete staff training	1	E	0
G	Trial bookings and system training	2	F	0
H	Staff feedback and system refinement	1	G	0
I	Customer communication	1	G	0
J	Financial readiness check	1	H, I	0
K	Digital booking system goes live	Milestone	J	0

Notes: Activities with zero float require close monitoring because delay may affect the planned implementation date. Activities H and I occur concurrently following system testing and must both be completed before the final readiness check. The critical path network is illustrated in Figure A5.2.

A5.2 - Critical Path Network Diagram for the salon Digital System Implementation

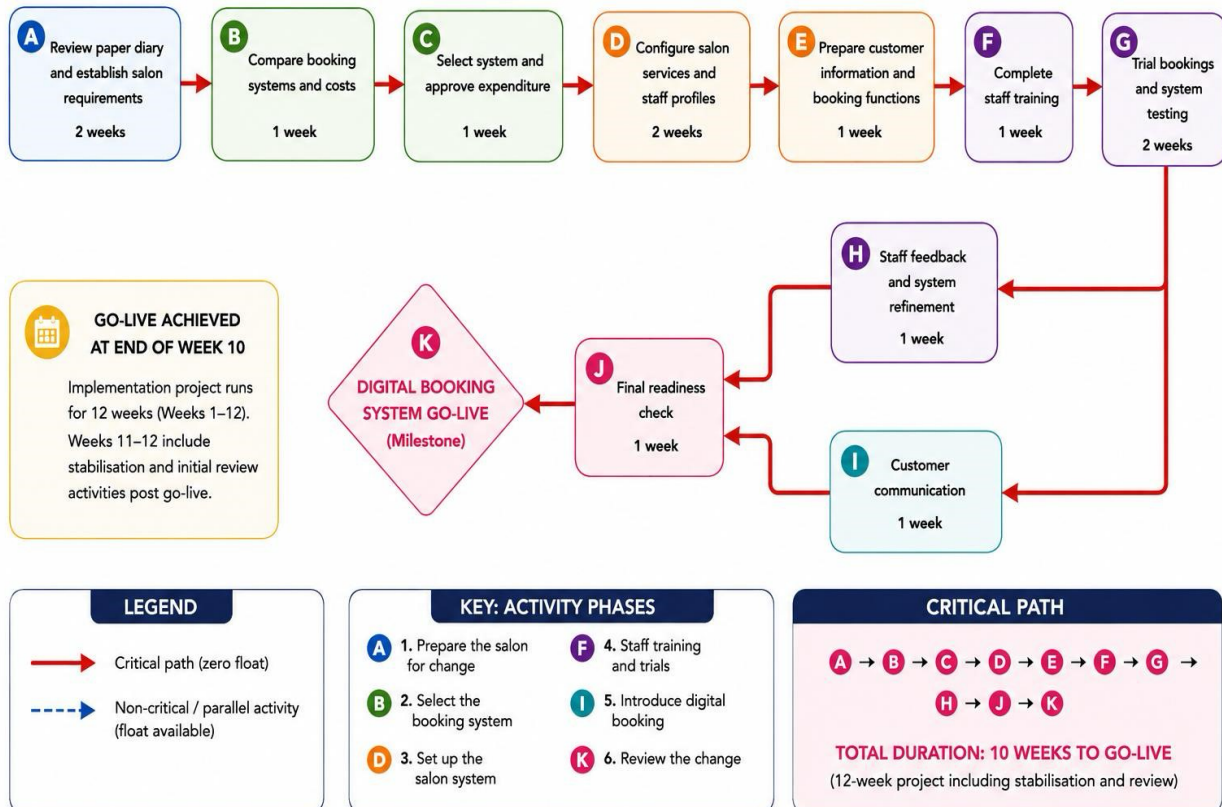


Diagram created by the author using ChatGPT (OpenAI, 2026), based on the 12-week project schedule developed for the salon booking system implementation.

Appendix B – Financial Appraisal

B1 – Project Budget and Contingency

B1.1 – Estimated Project Cost

The following project budget estimates the initial and recurring expenditure associated with implementing the proposed digital booking and customer-management system. As the salon operates with a small three-person workforce, costs have been kept proportionate to the scale of the business, while a contingency allowance is included to recognise uncertainty within initial project estimates.

Cost item	Basis of estimate	Estimated cost
System set up/configuration	One off allowance	£100
Booking system subscription	£30 x 12 months	£360
Staff training	3 x staff x 2 hours x £12	£72
Customer data preparation/transfer	4 hours x £15	£60
Customer communication/launch materials	Estimated allowance	£50
Hardware/accessories	Equipment allowance	£150
Total estimate cost		£792

Note: Figures are illustrative for project planning estimates and do not represent confirmed supplier quotations. Internal labour costs have been included to recognised staff time committed to implementation.

B1.2 - Contingency and Total Project Budget

Budget calculation	Amount
Estimated project cost	£792
Contingency allowance (10%)	£79.20
Total estimated project budget	£871.20

A 10% contingency allowance increases the estimated project budget of £871.20, providing a financial reserve for unforeseen implementation expenditure. Actual expenditure should be monitored against this budget throughout the project, with significant variances reviewed by the owner before additional expenditure is approved.

B2 – Cost Benefit and Payback Analysis

Table B2.2 - Cost Benefit and Payback Calculation

Financial measure	Calculation	Result
Estimated first year project cost	Appendix B1	£871.20
Estimated annual financial benefit	Table B2.1	£1200
Estimated first year net benefit	£1,200 - £871.20	£328
Benefit cost ration	£1200 / £871.20	1:38
Estimated payback period	£871.20 / £1200 x 12 months	8.7 months

Based on these assumptions, the project could generate and estimate first year net financial benefit of £328.20, with approximately £1.38 of financial benefit generated for every £1 invested. The estimate payback period is approximately 8.7 months, suggesting that the initial investment could potentially be recovered within the first year of operation.

However, these figures represent projections rather than guaranteed returns and should therefore be evaluated alongside non-financial benefits and actual post-information performance.

Table B2.3 - Anticipated Non-Financial Benefits

Benefit	Proposed Indicator
Improved customer service	Customer uptake
Greater booking accessibility	Bookings made outside salon opening hours
Reduced dependance on paper diary	Proportion of appointments managed daily
Improved staff access to appointment information	Staff feedback following implementation

Improved appointment communication	Use/reliability of automated confirmations and reminders
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Appendix C – Stakeholder Analysis and Prioritisation

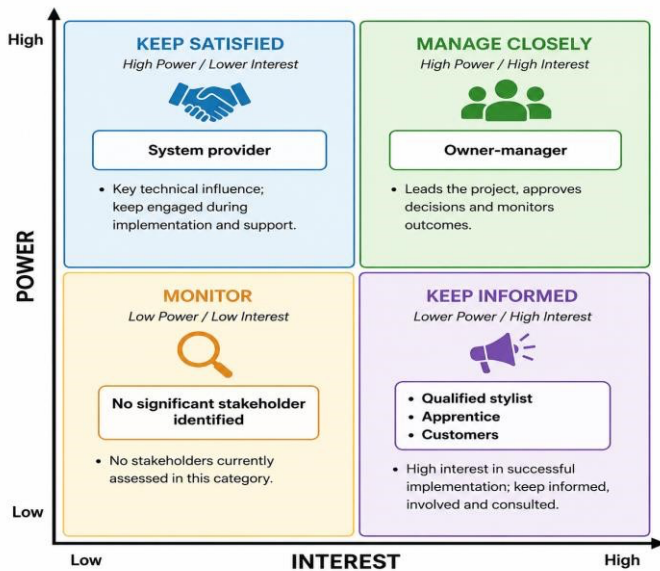
C1 – Stakeholder Power Interest Analysis

C1.1 - Stakeholder Power Interest Assessment

A Power Interest analysis was used to prioritise key stakeholders and determine the level of engagement required throughout the salon digital booking system.

Stakeholder	Power	Interest	Engagement
Owner	High	High	Manage closely – leads project and approves key decisions
Qualified Stylist	Medium	High	Actively involved in training, testing and feedback
Apprentice	Low	High	Keep informed and involve in training/testing
Customers	Low-Medium	High	Communicate changes and gather feedback
System provider	High	Medium	Keep satisfied, involve in configuration and support

C1.2 - Stakeholder Power Interest Matrix for the Salon Digital Booking Project



The matrix identifies the owner as the priority stakeholder due to high power of interest. Staff and customers require continued engagement to support adoption, while the system provider requires appropriate involvement due to its technical influence.

Diagram created by the author using ChatGPT (OpenAI, 2026), based on the stakeholder analysis developed for the salon digital system.

C2 - Stakeholder Salience Assessment

Stakeholder salience analysis was used to further prioritise stakeholders according to their power, legitimacy and urgency, supporting decisions about where management attention should be concentrated during implementation.

Stakeholder	Power	Legitimacy	Urgency	Project Priority
Owner	High	High	High	Very High
Stylist	Medium	High	High	High
Apprentice	Low	High	Medium	Medium
Customers	Low-Medium	High	Medium	Medium-High
System provider	High	High	Medium	High

The owner has the greatest salience because all three attributes are present. The stylist and system provider also require significant attention because staff adoption and technical delivery directly influence implementation. Customer and apprentice requirements remain legitimate but involve lower formal decision-making power.

Appendix D – Project Roles and Communication

D1 – RACI Responsibility Matrix

Table D1.1 - RACI Matrix for the Salon Digital System

A RACI matrix was developed to clarify responsibility and accountability for key activities within the salon digital booking project. This was particularly important within a small project team, where individuals may undertake multiple roles.

Project activity	Owner	Stylist	Apprentice	System provider
Identify salon requirements	A/R	C	C	I
Select booking system	A/R	C	I	C
Approve project expenditure	A/R	I	I	I
Configure system	A	C	I	R
Prepare/transfer customer data	A/R	C	I	C
Deliver system training	A	I	I	R
Complete staff training	A	R	R	C
Test booking process	A	R	R	C
Communicate change to customers	A/R	C	I	I
Approve system readiness	A/R	C	C	C
Monitor initial performance	A	R	R	R
Monitor initial performance	A/R	C	C	C
Complete project review	A/R	C	C	I

Key: **R** = Responsible **A** = Accountable **C** = Consulted **I** = Informed

The matrix establishes the owner as accountable for key project decisions while distributing operational and technical responsibilities across the salon team and systems provider. This provides clear accountability for a three-person business.

D2 - Project Communication Plan

The communication plan establishes how key stakeholders will receive relevant project information throughout implementation, ensuring communication remains proportionate to the needs of the small salon team.

Table D2.1 - Communication Plan for Digital Booking Project

Stakeholder	Information	Method	Frequency	Responsibility
Owner	Budget, schedule, risks and progress	Project review	Weekly/ key stages	Owner
Stylist	Progress, training, test and changes	Team discussion/ demonstration	Key stages	Owner
Apprentice	Training, testing and new procedures	Team discussion/ demonstration	Key stages	Owner
Customers	New booking process, launch and support	In salon communication	Prelaunch and launch	Owner
System provider	Configuration, technical issues, testing and feedback	Email, support contact	As required	Owner
Salon team	Initial performance and lessons learnt	Review meeting	Post and launch	Owner

Communication is the most frequent between the owner and salon team because their involvement is required through implementation. Customer communication is concentrated around launch, while contact with the system provider increases during configuration testing and technical problem resolution.

Appendix E – Risk, Monitoring and Control

E1 – Project Risk Register

The risk register identifies and evaluates key threats to the salon's digital project. Each risk is assessed using likelihood and impact scores from 1 (low) to 5 (high), with mitigation of actions and ownership and ownership assigned to support ongoing risk control.

Table E1.1 - Risk Register for the Salon Digital System

Risk	L	I	Score	Mitigation/ Response	Owner
Staff resistance to new system	3	4	12	Involve staff in training, provide training and support	Owner
Insufficient staff training	3	4	12	Complete training and trial booking systems	Owner
Customer data transfer error	2	5	10	Check data before and after and restrict access	Owner and Provider
System or internet failure	3	4	12	Confirm provider support and maintain temporary backup procedure	Provider and Owner
Implementation delay	2	4	8	Monitor critical activities and milestones	Owner
Project costs exceed budget	3	4	8	Monitor expenditure and retain 10% contingency	Owner
Low customer adoption	3	4	12	Communicate benefits, provide booking support during transition	Owner
Customer data/ privacy issue	2	5	10	Limit access and use appropriate secure system procedures	Owner and provider

Key: **L** = Likelihood **I** = Impact **R** = Risk Score = Likelihood x Impact

The highest initial risks relate to staff adoption, training, system reliability, and customer uptake, each scoring 12. This requires particular attention because successful implementation depends on both reliable technology and behavioral adoption by staff and customers. Risks should be reviewed throughout implementation rather than treated as fixed assessments.

E2 – Probability Impact Risk Matrix

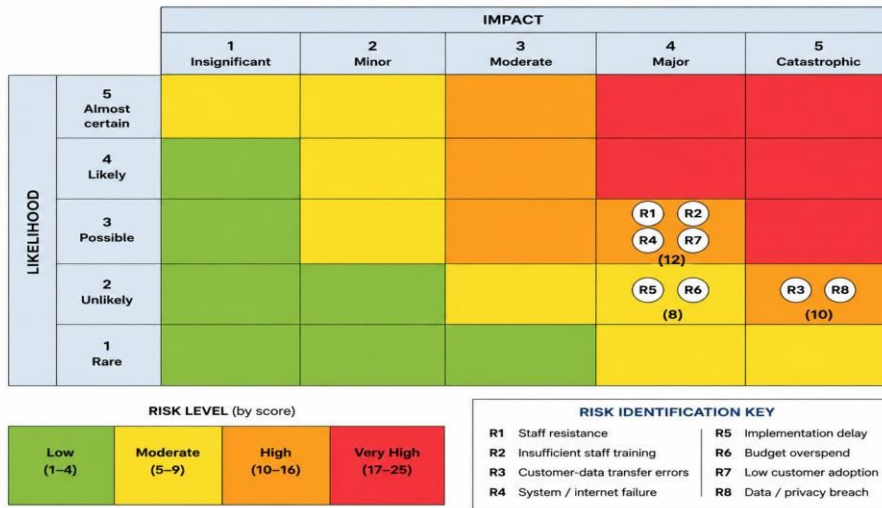
A 5x5 probability Impact Matrix was used to visually prioritise the risks identified in the project risk register in Appendix E1. Risk scores were calculated by multiplying likelihood by impact, enabling higher rated risks to receive greater management attention.

Table E2.1 - Risk Identification Key

Likelihood ↓ / Impact →	1	2	3	4	5
5 – Almost certain					
4 - Likely					
3 - Possible				R1, R2, R4, R7 (12)	
2- Unlikely				R5, R6 (8)	R3, R8 (10)
1 - Rare					

Risk Identification Key – The risk codes shown in table E2.1 are used within the Probability Impact Matrix to provide a clear visual representation of each risk according to its assessed likelihood and impact.

E2.2 - 5X5 Probability Impact Matrix



Note: Numbers in brackets show the risk score (Likelihood × Impact) for the risks placed in the matrix.

The matrix identifies staff resistance, insufficient training, system/internet failure, low customer adoption, data transfer errors, and data/privacy breach as high-priority risks. Implementation delays and budget overspend are assessed as moderate risks. This prioritisation enables management attention and mitigation actions to be focused on risks with greatest potential effect on successful implementation.

Diagram created by the author using ChatGPT (OpenAI, 2026), based on the risk assessment developed for the salon digital system implementation.

E3 – KPI Monitoring Framework

Key performance indicators (KPI's) were established to monitor project delivery and assess whether the digital booking system achieves the anticipated operational, customer and financial benefits.

Table E3.1 - KPI Monitoring Framework

KPI	Target/measure	Review point	Responsibility
Project schedule	Implementation within twelve weeks	Weekly	Owner
Project expenditure	Remain within £871.20 budget	Weekly	Owner
Staff training	100% of three staff trained before launch	Pre-launch	Owner
Staff adoption	All staff able to manage digital bookings confidently	Launch and monthly	Owner
Customer adoption	Increasing proportion of appointments booked daily	Monthly	
Administrative efficiency	Progress toward one-hour weekly time saving assumption	Monthly	Owner
Appointment capacity	Monitor avoidable gaps/cancellations against previous process	Monthly	Owner
System reliability	Record and review sytem/booking problems	Weekly initially	Owner
Finacial benefit	Compare actual benefits against £1200 annual estimate	Three months and annually	Owner

Customer experience	Review feedback on ease and convenience of booking	One – three months	Owner
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The framework extends project evaluation beyond time and cost by monitoring staff adoption, customer uptake, efficiency, reliability, and financial value. Comparing results with the assumptions established in the business case will enable the owner to determine whether anticipated benefits are being realised and identify where further improvement is required.

Appendix F – Professional Development

F1 – Project Management Skills Self-Audit

A project management Skills self-audit was completed following the project analysis to identify existing capabilities and areas requiring further professional development.

Project management skill	Self-rating (1-5)	Evidence from project	Development need
Communication	4	Stakeholder engagement and communication planning	Maintain
Leadership	4	Coordinating a small salon team through change	Maintain/develop
Planning and organisation	4	WBS, Gantt chart and project scheduling	Further develop
Stakeholder management	4	Power Interest, salience and engagement analysis	Further develop
Risk management	3	Risk Register and probability impact assessment	Develop
Financial management	3	Budget, CBA and payback analysis	Develop
Digital project management	3	Planning implementation of the booking system	Develop
Monitoring and evaluation	3	KPI and benefits realisation	Develop

Rating scale: 1 = Limited 2 = Developing 3 = Competent 4 = Strong 5 = Highly developed

The self-audit identifies communication, leadership, and organisation as stronger capabilities, while financial appraisal, risk management and digital project implementation require further development. These priorities inform the Personal Development Plan and present in F2.

F2 – Personal Development Plan

The PDP translates the developmental needs identified through self-audit into specific actions, timescales, and measures of achievement.

Development area	SMART Action	Timescale	Evidence of Achievement
Financial Management	Complete further learning in project budgeting, cost benefit analysis and financial appraisal and apply this to future business decisions.	Within six months	Completed learning and ability to produce and interpret project financial analysis independently
Risk management	Apply a structured risk register and probability impact assessment to future salon projects, reviewing risks throughout delivery.	Within six weeks	Completed and regularly reviewed risk register demonstrating appropriate mitigation
Digital project management	Develop greater confidence in selecting, implementing and evaluating digital business systems through practical involvement in digital change	Within twelve months	Evidence of independently planning and evaluating a digital improvement
Monitoring and evaluation	Use measurable KPI's to evaluate whether future projects achieve	Within six months	Completed post project evaluation
	intended operational and functional benefits		comparing planned and actual outcomes
Leadership development	Continue developing change leadership skills through staff consultation following business improvements	ongoing	Staff feedback and documented reflection identifying improvement in leadership practice

The PDP prioritises financial, risk and digital project management capability while continuing to develop existing leadership strengths. Measurable actions and timescales provide a basis for reviewing whether development activities result in improved project management practice.