

# ASSURANCE NATURE, PURPOSE & VALUE

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**Joanne Bradshaw**  
**DWP Programme Director**

# My Interest in Assurance

- Programme Director in DWP
- Head of DWP Project Delivery Profession
- Cabinet Office Accredited High Risk Assurance Review Team Leader
- Academic Research:
  - MSc Project & Programme Management
  - Project X Lead / MPhil @ Manchester

# Research Project

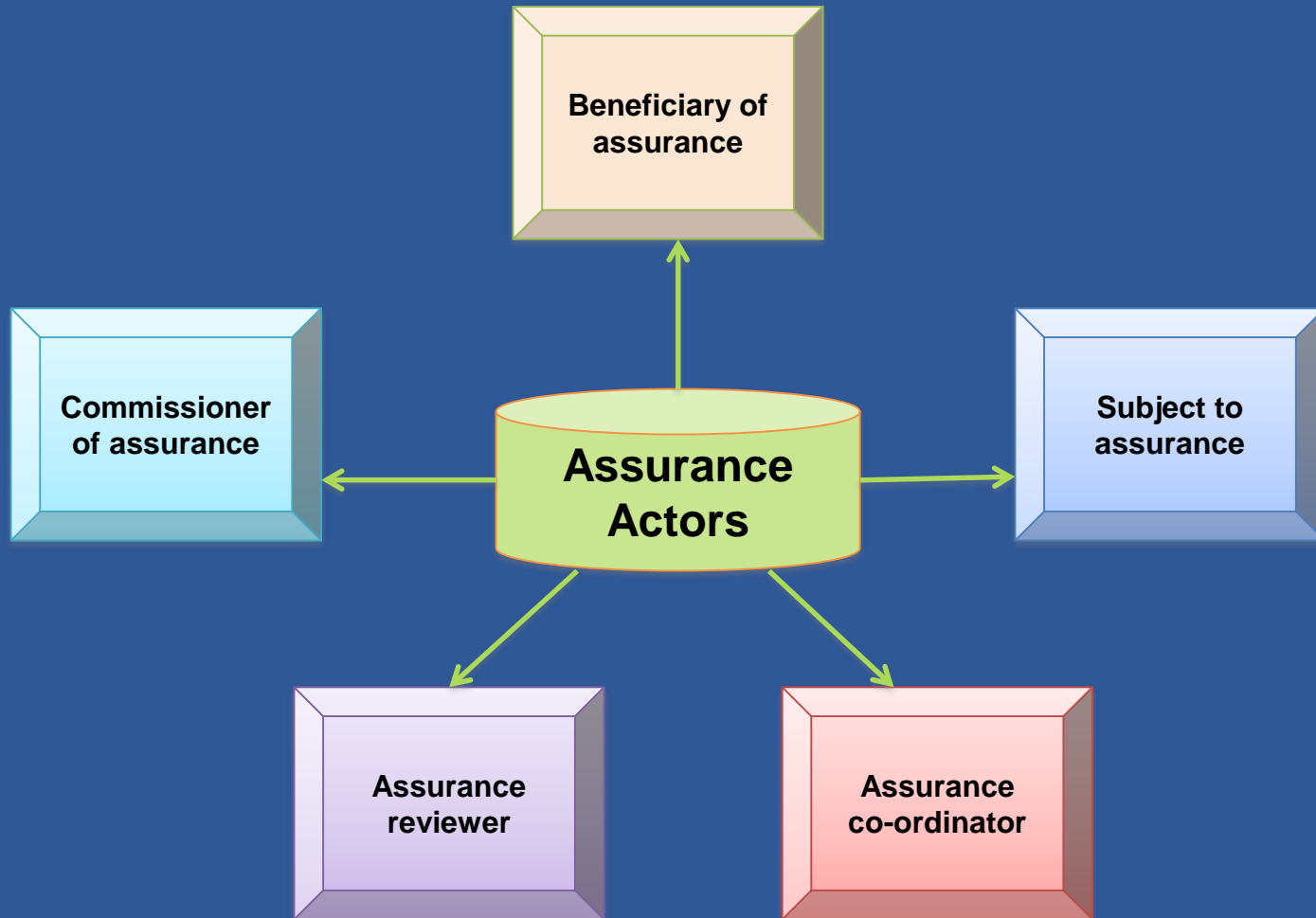
## Stakeholder Perspectives of Assurance

- Exploration of the concept of assurance through a stakeholder lens:
  - Nature of assurance?
  - Purpose (value) of assurance?
- Review of literature:
  - Academic
  - Government
  - Practitioner
- Interpretive research:
  - Interviews with stakeholders from major government programmes
- Analysis, learning points (professional practice / academic)

# Key Themes

- Assurance has numerous characteristics – one size doesn't fit all.
- There is a human dimension to assurance – stakeholders have different:
  - Roles in the assurance process.
  - Visions of what constitutes assurance.
  - Interpretations of the purpose / value of assurance.
  - Behaviours when influenced by assurance processes.
- 'Purposes' of assurance don't operate in isolation – need to understand dependencies.

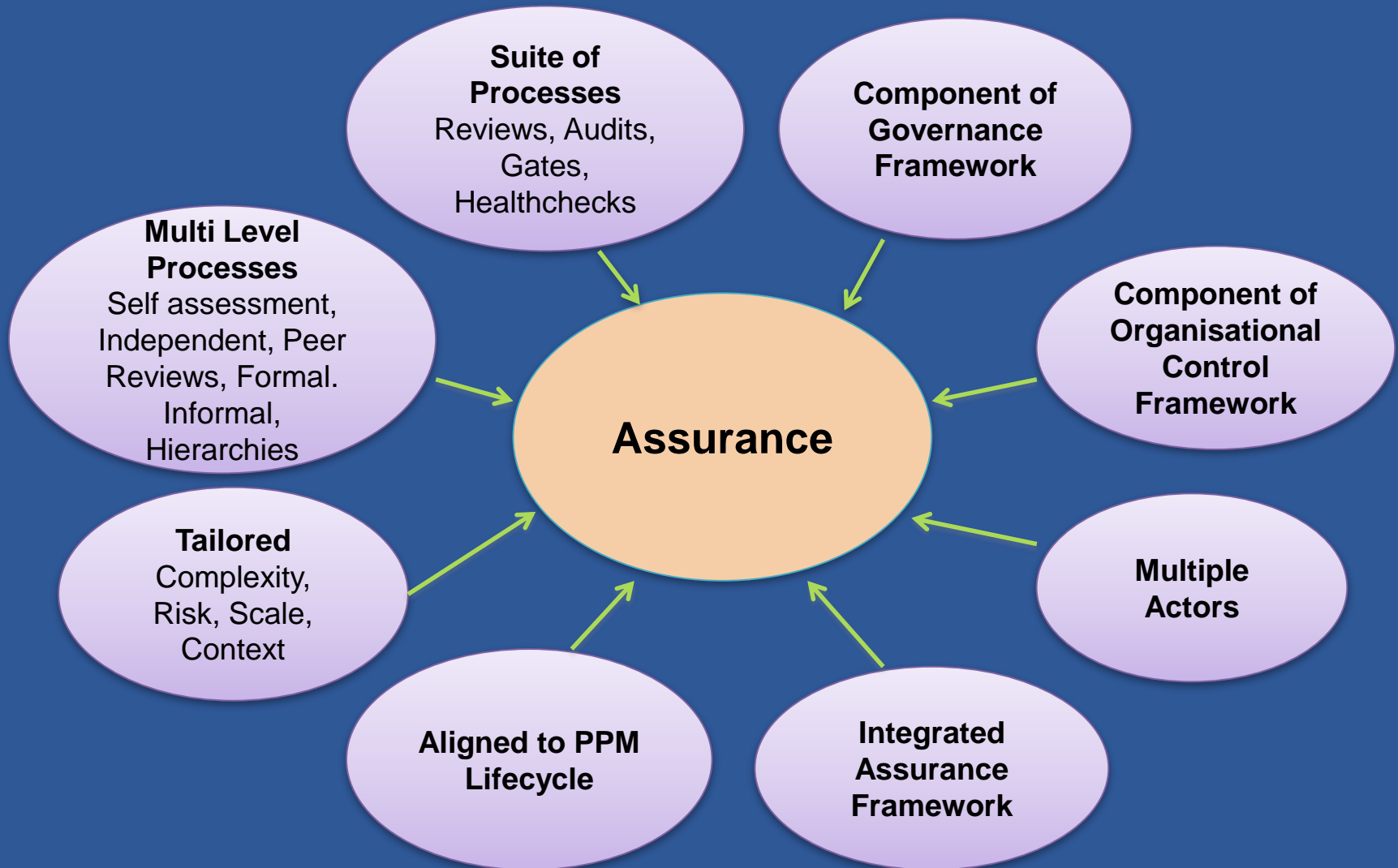
# Actors Involved in the Assurance Process



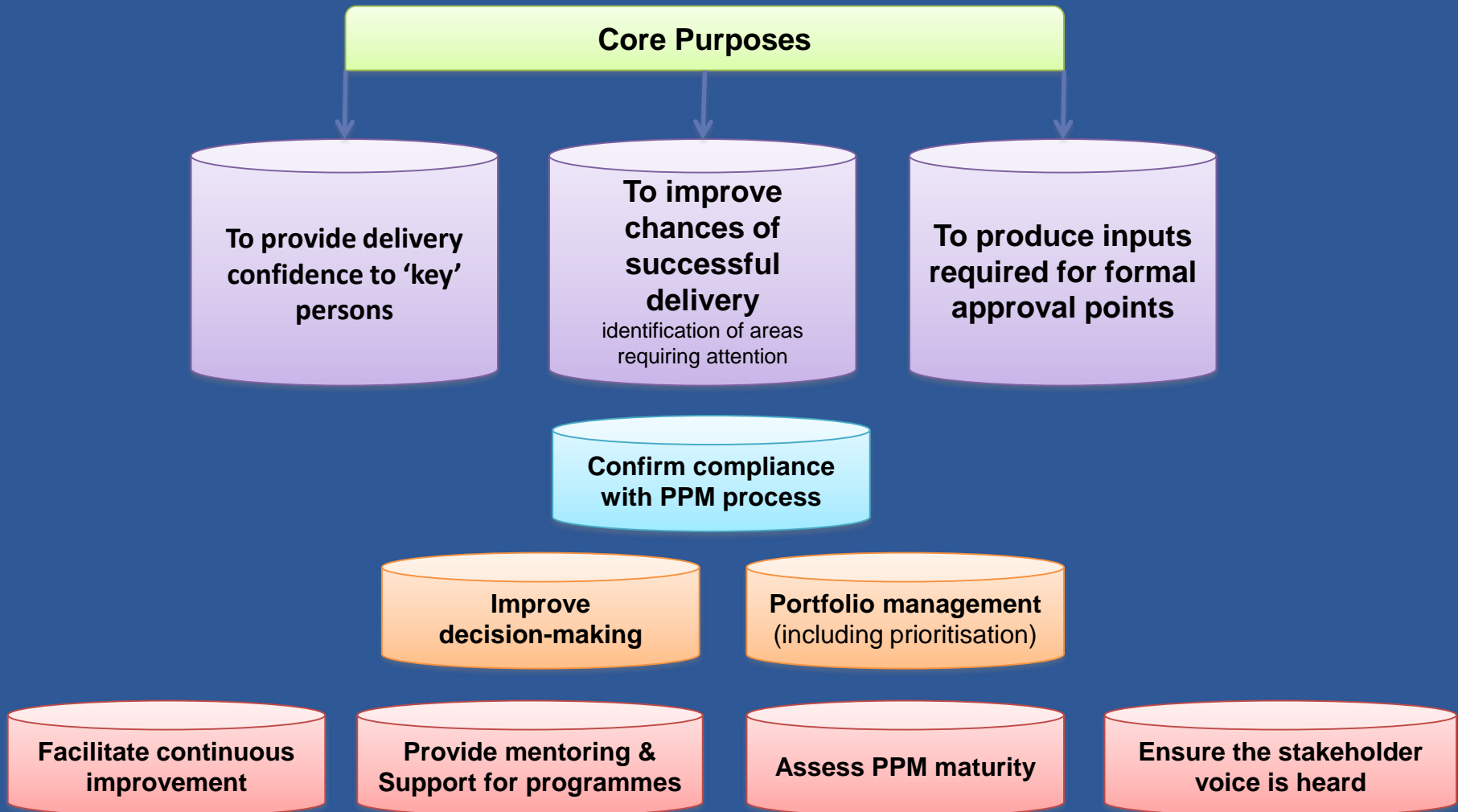
# Research - Interviewee Role Profile



# Perceptions of the Nature of Assurance



# Perceptions of the Purpose of Assurance





# Perceptions of Additional Benefits of Assurance

**'Provides reassurance – shows nothing to hide'**

**'Protection for PPM teams – approach validated by others'**

**'Has resulted in long-term behaviour change – more compliance to process, less lone wolves'**

**'Re-use of learning from other departments'**

**'Fresh insight through an expert view'**

**Benefits  
Of  
Assurance**

**'Supports stakeholder engagement & buy-in'**

**'Provides a learning experience for reviewers'**

**'Lever for project teams to unblock barriers.'**

**'Provides traceability of decision making'**

# Key Points

- **Assurance is multi-faceted:**
  - One size doesn't fit all
  - Multiple opportunities to add value
- **People have different perspectives of assurance:**
  - Perspectives vary by role
  - Perspectives can impact behaviour
- **There are risks associated with developing & implementing assurance frameworks:**
  - Threats
  - Opportunities

# Personal Reflections

- Importance of understanding stakeholder perspectives when developing & implementing assurance frameworks.
- Need to clearly define & share purpose of assurance activities & value add expected.
- Recognise I often wear multiple assurance '*hats*' – definition of assurance 'purpose' is critical.
- Wide range of benefits – need to maximise value of assurance opportunities.

**Any Questions ?**



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at an APM event

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