

Task Group Update

1. Evolve Programme Task Group

Supporting officer: Simon Bennett

Membership

Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman)
Cllr Dr Monica Devendran
Cllr Ruth Hopkinson
Cllr Horace Prickett
Cllr Mark Verbinnen

Background

The Evolve programme will mean the procurement and implementation of a new Cloud-based Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system for the council. The programme will impact on the work of all staff at the council in respect of HR, finance, procurement, and payroll processes. It will look to modernise technology and standardise business processes, improving efficiencies for core activities that are undertaken across the council, supporting their adoption through a comprehensive in-house business change and training effort, and will deliver improved data, insights, and reporting capabilities.

Terms of Reference (TOR)

- a) To provide efficient, effective scrutiny engagement on the council's Evolve programme under the direction of OS Management Committee.
- b) To receive periodic updates on the Evolve programme and scrutinise delivery of its key three objectives for the council, covering:
 - Organisational insight
 - Developing a flexible high-performance culture
 - Transforming business processes and digital technology
- c) To meet quarterly as standard unless there is a temporary need to meet more frequently or at a specific project milestone.
- d) To report findings and recommendations as appropriate to OS Management Committee following each task group meeting.

Recent activity

- The task group met on 13 October 2023. At that meeting the task group received an update on the programme and were notified that the initial system 'go live' date would be delayed to 13 November 2023. The HR/payroll 'go live' is in April 2024. The task group heard in detail the reason for the delay and how reaching the new 'go live' date would be managed. The task group was reassured that payments will not be affected by this change and that appropriate mitigations had been put in place to minimise disruption. The 'go live' date in April 2024 is not affected by this slight delay.
- The task group also had an update on the South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) report regarding the Evolve programme. This was a broadly positive report which stated that the overall risk of not completing the programme was low and that this was because the council had employed excellent program management techniques, particularly its communication planning and program management documentation. It did raise two issues concerning whether the programme would 'go live' on time and also programme resources. The task group heard how these issues were actively being addressed.
- The wider change management process was also discussed and how training was being delivered. Though slightly behind schedule, further resources are being directed at this part of the programme.
- The task group received a demonstration of the system looking at the customised homepage and the processes for expenses, procurement, and annual leave approval.
- The next meeting of the task group is on 15 December 2023 when the task group will focus upon the process of 'go live' in November 2023.

2. Financial Planning Task Group

Supporting Officer: Simon Bennett

Membership

Cllr Gavin Grant (Vice-chairman)
Cllr Gordon King
Cllr Charles McGrath
Cllr Pip Ridout (Chairman)
Cllr Ian Thorn
Cllr Ruth Hopkinson

Background

The Financial Planning Task Group (FPTG) is a standing task group reporting to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

Terms of reference

- a) To review the council's draft Financial Plan, Medium-Term Financial Strategy (4-year financial model) and Treasury Management Strategy, reporting its findings to OS Management Committee.
- b) To undertake regular monitoring of the council's capital and revenue budgets (including the delivery of savings), ensuring that mid-year trends and developments are considered when the council's Financial Plan is updated.
- c) To undertake ongoing review of the council's financial position, including the monitoring of reserves, investments, debt, and financial risks.
- d) Where they materially affect the council's overall financial position, to consider the council's:
 - i. approach to strategic procurement
 - ii. major contracts
 - iii. financial investment in, and liability to, its wholly owned subsidiaries.
- e) To help develop the council's approach to the annual budget setting cycle, including the specific contribution of Overview and Scrutiny.
- f) To bring regular reports to OS Management Committee, highlighting key financial developments and risks for further discussion.

Recent activity

- The task group has not met since the last OSMC on 26 September 2023.
- The Task Group will however meet on 10 November to discuss the following Cabinet reports:
 - Financial Year 2023/24 Q2 Revenue Budget Monitoring
 - Financial Year 2023/24 Q2 Capital Budget Monitoring
 - Mid-year Treasury Management Update report
- The Financial Planning task group continues to seek new members and Cllr Philip Whitehead has agreed to join the task group.
- The task group's forward work plan 2023/24 is attached as Appendix 2. Note that the timing of meetings is currently being reassessed and dates may change in the near future. The roles and responsibilities for financial scrutiny are set out at Appendix 1.

Proposals

- 1. To note the update on the Task Group activity provided.**
- 2. To agree that Cllr Philip Whitehead becomes a member of the Financial Planning task group.**

3. To note the Financial Planning Task Group's forward work plan.

Report authors:

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Finance scrutiny structure

Appendix 2 Financial Planning Task Group – Forward Work Programme

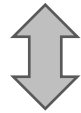
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Finance scrutiny structure

OS Management Committee

Public scrutiny following more detailed review by the Financial Planning Task Group (where practicable):

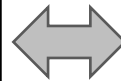
- a) Draft annual Financial Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), including Resources directorate budget.
- b) Revenue and capital budget monitoring quarterly updates
- c) Treasury Management Strategy and updates



Financial Planning Task Group

More detailed pre-Cabinet scrutiny, and reports to OS Management Committee, on:

- a) Draft Financial Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
- b) Treasury Management Strategy and updates
- c) Revenue and capital budget updates – including reserves, investments, debt, and financial risks, flagging issues of concern to Select Committees
- d) Where they materially affect the council's overall financial position, the council's:
 - i. approach to strategic procurement
 - ii. major contracts
 - iii. financial investment in, and liability to, its wholly owned subsidiaries.



Select Committees

- a) Informal annual review of the Draft Financial Plan to support formal scrutiny at OS Management Committee
- b) Exploring service implications of financial issues flagged by OS Management Committee and Financial Planning Task Group
- c) Flagging identified financial risks to OS Management Committee and Financial Planning Task Group
- d) Reviewing service/outcomes implications of major contract decisions

APPENDIX 2

Financial Planning Task Group (FPTG) Forward Work Plan 2023/24

Date	Item	Details	Officers	Cabinet Member
10 November 2023	Financial Year 2023/24 Q2 Revenue Budget Monitoring Financial Year 2023/24 Q2 Capital Budget Monitoring Mid-year Treasury Management Update report	Cabinet 14 Nov 2023 OSMC 15 Nov 2024	Lizzie Watkin Director of Finance (S151 Officer)	Cllr Nick Botterill Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning
8 December 2023	Council Tax Reduction Scheme (tbc) Council Tax Second Properties (tbc)	Cabinet 12 Dec 2023	Lizzie Watkin Director of Finance (S151 Officer)	Cllr Nick Botterill Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning
5 January 2024	<i>tbc – meeting may be cancelled dependent upon whether there are agenda items.</i>	Cabinet 9 Jan 2024		
19 January 2024	Budget 2024/5 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 – 2026/27 (tbc)	Cabinet 30 Jan 2024 OSMC 25 Jan 2024	Lizzie Watkin Director of Finance (S151 Officer)	Cllr Nick Botterill Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning
2 February 2024	Financial Year 2023/24 – Q3 Revenue Budget Monitoring (tbc) Financial Year 2023/24 – Q3 Capital Budget Monitoring (tbc) Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2024/25 (tbc)	Cabinet 6 Feb 2024 OSMC 12 Feb 2023	Lizzie Watkin Director of Finance (S151 Officer)	Cllr Nick Botterill Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning

Date	Item	Details	Officers	Cabinet Member
15 March 2024	<i>tbc – meeting may be cancelled dependent upon whether there are agenda items.</i>	Cabinet 19 March 2024		

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