

Wiltshire Council

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

15 November 2022

Finance, corporate resources and organisational scrutiny – update

Purpose of the report

1. To provide an update on the changes to Overview and Scrutiny's (OS) approach to engaging with financial, corporate and organisational matters agreed in May 2022.

Background

2. On 19 May 2022, OS Management Committee (OSMC) received a report which proposed changes to OS's approach to engaging with financial, corporate and organisational matters, following a review led by the Chairman of OSMC.
3. OSMC resolved to accept the proposals set out in the report (see below) and to review the approach after six months.
4. This report updates the Committee on progress with the proposals as of November 2022.

Updates

(Table below)

OSMC resolution (May 2022)	Update
<p>1. OS Management Committee to receive the following key financial reports, after review and commentary by the Financial Planning Task Group (FPTG):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Financial Plan • Medium-Term Financial Strategy • Revenue and capital budget monitoring • Treasury Management Strategy 	<p>OSMC has since received the following financial reports, alongside commentary from Financial Planning Task Group (FPTG):</p> <p>14 July 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year End Revenue Financial Out-turn Position 2021/2022 • Year End Capital Investment Programme Financial Out-turn Position 2021/2022 • Treasury Management Out-turn Report 2022/23 <p>28 September 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Year 2022/2023 - Quarter One Revenue Budget Monitoring • Financial Year 2022/2023 - Quarter One Capital Budget Monitoring <p>November 2022</p> <p>In November, OSMC's meeting does not align with the timeline for Quarter Two Budget Monitoring reports. Therefore, all OSMC members have been invited to attend the FPTG meeting on 25 November 2022, when these reports will be considered prior to Cabinet on 29 November 2022.</p> <p>Scheduled activity:</p> <p>FPTG – 20 January 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Financial Plan 2023-24 • Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2023/24 <p>OSMC – 24 January 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Financial Plan 2023-24 • Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2023/24 <p>OSMC – 7 February 2023</p>

OSMC resolution (May 2022)	Update
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opposition group amendments to the Draft Financial Plan 2023-24
<p>2. Select Committees to retain their ability to query and flag any significant financial concerns relating to any proposals they consider, with concerns referred to OS Management Committee for further discussion as appropriate.</p>	<p>The Chairs and Vice-chairs of OSMC, FPTG and the three select committees have discussed and recapped on their roles and responsibilities regarding financial scrutiny.</p> <p>During November/December 2022, FPTG will hold a series of meetings focused on key departmental council budgets, with the relevant Select Committee Chairs and Vice-chairs will attend to provide a link with scrutiny of service delivery.</p>
<p>3. Proposals for greater OS engagement on other corporate and organisational matters to be developed, following discussion between the OS Management Committee Chairman, Vice-chairman, appropriate Cabinet Members and directors.</p>	<p>Since May 2022, OSMC has considered the following corporate, organisational and resources issues:</p> <p>28 September 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Performance and Risk - Quarter One Monitoring • Annual Wiltshire Council Complaints Report 2021-2022 • Asset Transfer and Service Devolution Policy (rapid scrutiny) <p>15 November 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially Responsible Procurement Policy <p>OSMC also has an Evolve Programme Task Group monitoring implementation of the procurement and implementation of a new Cloud-based Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system for the council.</p> <p>Work planning meetings between the OSMC Chair/Vice-chair and their Executive and Director counterparts are being arranged to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance, Procurement and Commissioning • ICT and Digital • Transformation

OSMC resolution (May 2022)	Update
<p>4. The Chairman and Vice-chairman of OS Management Committee to develop proposals for the Committee’s scrutiny of corporate performance and risk, following discussion with the appropriate Cabinet Members, directors and Select Committee Chairmen.</p>	<p>On 28 September 2022, OSMC received the first Council Performance and Risk monitoring report to Cabinet. It resolved to continue to receive these, while asking the other three select committees to explore their own arrangements for more detailed scrutiny of performance and risk within their areas.</p>
<p>5. The Financial Planning Task Group’s responsibilities to be clarified by amending its terms of reference as set out under paragraph 21, with a definition of “major” contracts to be agreed following further discussion</p>	<p>Discussions with Procurement and Commissioning are underway to identify appropriate contracts and develop a timetable. In the meantime, the Chair and Vice-chair of FPTG have continued to attend briefings on contract matters alongside the relevant Select Committee Chair and Vice-chair.</p>
<p>6. Appropriate learning and development be arranged to support members to undertake effective finance scrutiny.</p>	<p>On 8 September 2022, training in local government finance was delivered by the Corporate Director Resources & Deputy Chief Executive (S.151 Officer) and Assistant Director Finance. This was attended by 34 members and a video of the session can be viewed on the Councillors’ Hub (link here).</p> <p>On 24 November 2022, the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) will deliver training at County Hall for OS members on conducting effective finance scrutiny. Members interested in attending are asked to contact simon.bennett@wiltshire.gov.uk.</p> <p>More broadly, CfGS will deliver a further member training session on Effective Scrutiny Questioning (date to be confirmed).</p>

Proposal

5. To note the update on implementation of the changes to Overview and Scrutiny's (OS) approach to engaging with financial, corporate and organisational matters agreed in May 2022.

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Appendices

None