

Wiltshire Council

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

23 May 2023

Task Group Update

1. Evolve Programme Task Group

Supporting officer: Simon Bennett

Membership

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

Background

The Evolve programme will involve 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 20 April 2023 and again on 25 April 2023 to be briefed separately on the Evolve change management programme.
- The task group reviewed the high-level issues and risk register. The programme overall is back on track, though pressures on delivery were acknowledged, and the intention is to 'go live' date of 1 November 2023. There are still issues with staff resources, though steps are being taken to fill the gaps.
- Some elements of the original tender cannot be provided by the contractor. This is however an issue faced by other local authorities using a cloud based Oracle system. The elements are not critical to the delivery of the programme, but the council is looking at alternative ways of addressing these issues.
- Current licencing arrangement are being managed to ensure that they work with the programme timetable.
- The task group were also brought up to date on programme finances and how budget pressures are being managed.
- The task group received a separate briefing regarding the Evolve change programme. Steady progress in being made, staff workshops are ongoing. Workforce feedback about the systems is being broadened. Gaps in engagement are being mapped and addressed.

2. Financial Planning Task Group

Supporting Officer: Simon Bennett

Membership

Cllr Gavin Grant (Vice-chair)
Cllr Gordon King
Cllr Charles McGrath
Cllr Pip Ridout (Chair)
Cllr Ian Thorn
Cllr Elizabeth Threlfall
Cllr Mark Verbinnen

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 meeting of the Committee in April 2023.
- The task group's forward work plan 2023/24 is attached as Appendix 2. The roles and responsibilities for financial scrutiny are set out at Appendix 1.

3. Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Scrutiny Panel

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the Joint Scrutiny Panel are quite lengthy and therefore not included in full here, however, an extract detailing the purpose of the panel is included below (*paragraph numbering from the terms of reference*):

(9.) This Panel will act as a critical friend, developing an overview of strategies and plans and providing independent scrutiny of the work of the LEP Board. It is an essential element of assuring democratic accountability for the use of public funds.

(10.) The objective is to make constructive recommendations for how future decisions of the LEP can be effectively implemented.

(11.) The Panel will not have the power to delay the SWLEP's decisions but it will be able to make recommendations for improvement to the SWLEP's decision making process and will be able to make its conclusions public.

Recent activity

The Joint Scrutiny Panel, commissioned by the LEP but with member engagement and administrative support provided by the council, has not met since February 2022. This is due to LEP activity having changed in recent years, with significantly less funding being directed to the LEP by Central Government. Government funding now accounts for only approximately half of the LEP's annual turnover. This is used to operate the LEP's core functions (business engagement, economic planning and delivery of programmes) and the Growth Hub. Central Government is expected to end the remaining public funding in March 2024. The LEP has therefore decided to decommission the Joint Scrutiny Panel due to the lack of LEP activity that is now appropriate for scrutiny by elected members.

Proposals

- 1. To note the update on the Task Group activity provided.**
 - 2. To note the Financial Planning Task Group's forward work plan.**
 - 3. To note the disbandment of the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Joint Scrutiny Panel by the LEP.**
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Report authors:

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Appendices

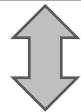
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| Appendix 1 | Finance scrutiny structure |
| Appendix 2 | Financial Planning Task Group – Forward Work Programme |

Finance scrutiny structure

OS Management Committee

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

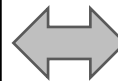
- a) Draft annual Financial Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), including Resources directorate budget.
- b) Revenue and capital budget monitoring quarterly updates
- c) Treasury Management Strategy and updates



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
9 June 2023	Treasury Management Outturn Report 2022/23 (tbc)	Cabinet 13 June 2023	Andy Brown Corporate Director Resources & Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer)	Cllr Nick Botterill Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning
7 July 2023	Year End Revenue Financial Outturn Position 2022/23 (tbc) Year End Capital Investment Programme Financial Outturn Position 2022/23 (tbc)	Cabinet 11 July 2023	Andy Brown Corporate Director Resources & Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer)	Cllr Nick Botterill Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning
8 September 2023	Financial Year 2023/24 Q1 Revenue Budget Monitoring (tbc) Financial Year 2023/24 Q1 Capital Budget Monitoring (tbc)	Cabinet 12 Sep 2023	Andy Brown Corporate Director Resources & Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer)	Cllr Nick Botterill Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning
6 October 2023	<i>tbc – meeting may be cancelled dependent upon whether there are agenda items.</i>	Cabinet 10 Oct 2023		
10 November 2023	Financial Year 2023/24 Q2 Revenue Budget Monitoring (tbc) Financial Year 2023/24 Q2 Capital Budget Monitoring (tbc)	Cabinet 14 Nov 2023	Andy Brown Corporate Director Resources & Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer)	Cllr Nick Botterill Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning

Date	Item	Details	Officers	Cabinet Member
8 December 2023	<i>tbc – meeting may be cancelled dependent upon whether there are agenda items.</i>	Cabinet 12 Dec 2023		
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 OSMC 23 Jan 2024	Andy Brown Corporate Director Resources & Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer)	Cllr Nick Botterill Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning
26 January 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 30 Jan 2024	Andy Brown Corporate Director Resources & Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer)	Cllr Nick Botterill Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning
15 March 2024	<i>tbc – meeting may be cancelled dependent upon whether there are agenda items.</i>	Cabinet 19 March 2024		