

Wiltshire Council

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

22 March 2022

Task Group Update

1. Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) Joint Scrutiny Panel

Membership

Wiltshire Councillors:

Cllr Richard Britton (Chairman)
Cllr George Jeans
Cllr Ian Thorn

Swindon Borough Councillors:

Cllr Junab Ali (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Burn-Howell
Cllr Oladapo Ibitoye

Business Representatives

Craig Holmes
Andrew Hogben

Supporting officer: Ceri Williams

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 Panel met on 14th February, where the focus of the meeting was the Levelling-Up White Paper and the implications for the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The White Paper outlined that for those areas seeking devolution deals, the LEP would be incorporated into the respective local authority.
- For areas not seeking devolution deals, the LEP would continue. However, at the time of meeting letters outlining the financial settlements from government had not been received; these were anticipated by the end of February.
- The budget settlement would determine how the LEP covering Swindon and Wiltshire would function going forward. Government revenue funding was currently £0.5m per annum. The expectation was that this would be reduced.
- The LEP had extended staff contracts until July 2022, with the intention to revisit this area on receipt of the settlement information.
- The settlement from government would have potential implications for the ongoing work of the Panel. If the operating model for LEP was to change, with a greater focus towards commercial opportunities and self-sufficiency rather than being centrally funded, this would necessitate a review of governance.
- The next meeting of the panel will consider the central funding for the LEP and the implications this has going forward, including the ongoing role of scrutiny.

2. Evolve Programme Task Group

Supporting officer: Ceri Williams

Membership

Cllr Joh Hubbard (Chair)
Cllr Dr Monica Devendran
Cllr Ruth Hopkinson
Cllr Horace Prickett
Cllr Mark Verbinnen
Cllr Mary Webb

Purpose

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) is asked to approve the establishment of a new task group to consider the council's Evolve programme.

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)

1. The following TOR are proposed to underpin the work of the new task group:
 - 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's next quarterly meeting is scheduled for 8 April, where the emphasis will be on the change management aspect of the programme.

3. Asset Transfer Rapid Scrutiny Exercise

Supporting officer: TBC

Membership

TBC

Background

In September 2021, then Committee received an update on implementation of the Policy, which was considered by overview and scrutiny prior to its adoption in 2017. It was resolved:

1. To note the update on the Asset Transfer Policy, which will now be reviewed, and ask Cabinet to note the points raised by the Committee.
2. To note the reported intention for a consultation on the Policy in November 2021 and a report to Cabinet in early 2022 to reset the policy and programme, taking into account resource requirements and town/parish council appetite.

3. To establish a rapid scrutiny exercise to provide Overview and Scrutiny input on the Policy review process following completion of the Consultation process, with arrangements to be agreed by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Cabinet Member and reported back to Committee.

In November 2021, an update was requested by members of Management Committee and it was reported that the planned consultation with town/parish councils on the Policy would now be replaced with a town/parish council conference to be held in January 2022.

A further, verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

Proposals

- 1. To note the update on task group and panel activity provided.**
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