

## Wiltshire Council

### Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

9 March 2021

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#### Task Group Update

##### 1. Financial Planning Task Group

###### Membership

Cllr Pip Ridout (Chairman)  
Cllr Richard Britton  
Cllr Stewart Dobson  
Cllr Gavin Grant  
Cllr Ruth Hopkinson  
Cllr George Jeans  
Cllr Stuart Wheeler

*Supporting officer: Simon Bennett*

###### Terms of Reference:

1. To understand and review the Medium Term Financial Strategy (4 year financial model)
2. To understand and review the approach and robustness of the financial planning regime within the Council
3. To understand and help develop the approach to the annual budget setting cycle
4. To review the specific contribution of overview and scrutiny in the annual budget setting cycle with a focus on outcomes
5. To undertake periodic budget monitoring including reviews of key midyear trends and developments and to ensure that these are taken into account when updating the Financial Plan
6. To work under the direction and guidance of the Management Committee and report regularly to the Cabinet Member, Management Committee and select committees (as appropriate) on its work and findings and to make any necessary referrals
7. To review the council's Performance and Risk monitoring reports and the Corporate Performance Framework.

###### Recent activity

Due to the pandemic the task group did not meet, and then informally, until the end of summer. On 8 October it considered the Month 5 Budget Monitoring report before it went to the COVID-19 task group. Formal meetings began again from November 2021. In December (4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>) the task group held several meetings, with the

Chairman of the Select Committees, looking at the highways, waste, adult social care, adult mental health, safeguarding and school transport budgets 2020/21.

On 20 January 2021 the task group met to consider the council's Budget 2021/22 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 to 2024/25. A report of the meeting went to [OSMC](#) on 26 January 2021 and to [Full Council](#) on 23 February 2021.

## **2. Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) Joint Scrutiny Panel**

### Membership

#### **Wiltshire Councillors:**

Cllr Alan Hill (Chairman)  
Cllr George Jeans  
Cllr Ian McLennan

#### **Swindon Borough Councillors:**

Cllr Junab Ali  
Cllr Vinay Manro  
Cllr Kevin Parry (Vice-chair)

#### **Business Representative**

Amanda Newbery  
(2 vacancies)

*Supporting officer: Marie Gondlach*

### 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 proposal for the establishment of the joint scrutiny panel and terms of reference were presented to this committee on 17 March 2020 (access [here](#)).

The joint scrutiny panel then held its first meeting in July 2020 and has met three more times since.

Understandably, as a newly established body, the first meetings have been dedicated to developing knowledge and understanding of the SWLEP itself.

Nonetheless, the joint scrutiny panel has also reviewed the new arrangements for the SWLEP Board governance framework, mid-year performance, development of the Growth Hub and the Getting Building Fund.

The joint scrutiny panel has also received regular updates on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on any spending or delivery of projects.

In January 2021, three members of the joint scrutiny panel (one from each membership group) started a deep dive exercise on the Growth Hub with the following aims:

To review the Growth Hub's current role, activity and performance, in the context of information nationally available on Growth Hubs and applying comparison, where relevant and comparable (i.e comparable data), to identify best practice and areas for development or improvement.

The outcome of the deep dive will be reported to the joint scrutiny panel in April and further updates will be provided to this committee as well.

Work is also underway to appoint to the two vacancies for Business Representatives.

### 3. **Commercialism Task Group**

#### Membership

Cllr Richard Britton  
Cllr Tony Deane  
Cllr Gordon King  
Cllr Ian Thorn  
Cllr Stuart Wheeler (Chairman)

*Supporting officer: Marie Gondlach*

#### Terms of Reference

- a) To support implementation of the council's commercialism agenda, by considering and making recommendations regarding,
  - Developing existing income streams
  - Developing new commercial opportunities, either through existing assets or developing or acquiring new ones
  - Councillor and officer expertise in this area
  - The experiences of other local authorities
  - Legal and commercial issues

- The ethos, values and reputation of the council when considering opportunities.
- b) To liaise with the Financial Planning Task Group, Audit Committee and the Traded Services for Schools Task Group to ensure that a holistic approach is taken with regards to commercialism for the council.

### Recent activity

Under the agreed streamlined overview and scrutiny approach during the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been no meeting of the task group since March 2020

### **Proposals**

**To note the update on Task Group activity provided.**

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Report authors:

Simon Bennet, Senior Scrutiny Officer, T: 01225 718 709,

E: [simon.bennett@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:simon.bennett@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Marie Gondlach, Senior Scrutiny Officer, T: 01225 713 597,

E: [marie.gondlach@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:marie.gondlach@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Henry Powell, Scrutiny Lead, T: 01225 718 052,

E: [henry.powell@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:henry.powell@wiltshire.gov.uk)