

Wiltshire Council

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

21 September 2021

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 Russell Holland

Business Representative

Amanda Newbery

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 SWLEP panel met on the 9 August. The focus of the meeting was to consider the Governance Review being undertaken by the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) and the Cyber Business Centre development Programme. It was recognised that central government was currently undertaking a national review of LEPs and that the SWLEP governance reforms could not be finalised until the results of this were published. The panel agreed to suspend further scrutiny of SWLEP governance until that point. The Business Cyber Centre (the first business led cyber centre in the UK), a capital programme being led by SWLEP Ltd itself, generated a lot of interest because of the uniqueness of the project and the necessity to utilise the government funding by March 2022. The panel has agreed to meet again on 13th Sept where it will consider the business case for the Cyber Centre in readiness for further discussion at the panel's next meeting on 18th October.

Proposals

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

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