

Wiltshire Council

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

15 November 2022

Task Group Update

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

Membership

Wiltshire Councillors:

Cllr George Jeans

Cllr Ian Thorn

Vacancy

Swindon Borough Councillors:

Cllr Steve Heyes

Cllr Dan Smith

Cllr Junab Ali

Business Representatives

Andrew Hogben

Vacancy

Vacancy

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 has not met since the last meeting of the Committee.

- The LEP is currently considering the future type of scrutiny it wishes to commission. When the LEP incorporated as a limited company in January 2019, government funding constituted 90% of total income; this year (22-23) the figure is circa 30%. It is anticipated that any future government funding will reduce further.

2. Evolve Programme Task Group

Supporting officer: Simon Bennett

Membership

Cllr Joh 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 30 September 2022.
- The Task Group received a programme update, where it was confirmed that parts of the programme would not be completed to the original timetable. Issues are being escalated and actions are being taken to address the issues including increasing the number of Programme Boards.
- Members were given an overview of the management of risk, including mitigating actions.
- The Task Group meets again on 2 December 2022, earlier than originally proposed, to be updated on progress with addressing the issues raised on 30 September 2022.

3. Financial Planning Task Group

Supporting Officer: Simon Bennett

Membership

Cllr Gavin Grant (Vice-chair)
 Cllr Gordon King
 Cllr Charles McGrath
 Cllr Bill Parks
 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

- 1) To review the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (4-year financial model).
- 2) To review the approach and robustness of the council's capital, debt, and revenue financial planning regime.
- 3) To 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 upon outcomes.
- 5) To undertake periodic budget monitoring including reviews of key midyear trends and developments and to ensure that these are considered when updating the Financial Plan.

- 6) To, where it materially affects the council's overall financial position, to consider the council's:
 - a) approach to strategic procurement
 - b) major or financially significant contracts
 - c) financial investment in, and liability to, its wholly owned subsidiaries.
- 7) 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.

Recent activity

- The task group has not met since the OSMC meeting in September.
- The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the task group have scheduled meetings with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the select committees to discuss the council's Q1 revenue and capital reports. This will be used to identify potential areas for financial scrutiny of services in the coming months.
- The task group meeting on 25 November 2022 has been extended with the members of OSMC invited to attend. This is to allow an informed discussion about the Q2 revenue and capital reports as OSMC will be unable to receive a report regarding Q2 from FPTG before the Cabinet meeting on 29 November.
- Cllr George Jean has stepped down from the group and it is requested that Cllr Mark Verbinnen be appointed to the task group.

Proposals

- 1. To note the update on activity provided.**
- 2. To thank Cllr George Jeans for his work on the Financial Planning Task Group and to appoint Cllr Mark Verbinnen to its membership.**

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