

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, 29 April 2014

Purpose of report

1. To seek the views of the Management Committee on the proposed arrangements for the joint scrutiny of the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) by Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council, as outlined in the attached report.

Background

2. Local Enterprise Partnerships were created in 2011 and as a new organisation, the governance arrangements of the SWLEP have been developing over time. To best reflect local circumstances, it has been recognised that there is a need to introduce a scrutiny mechanism for holding the SWLEP, and in particular its Strategic Economic Plan, to public account.
3. A view has been taken by the LEP and the supporting councils that the introduction of light touch joint overview and scrutiny arrangements could provide for an appropriate level of public accountability.
4. Discussions have now taken place at officer level between Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council on the potential practical arrangements for the joint scrutiny of the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership and these are described in the attached report.
5. Officers are working on a briefing note for members in conjunction with the LEP to provide background information.
6. Swindon Borough Council's Corporate Governance Review Working Group considered the report on 1 April and concluded that the recommended option three, of a pilot informal Task Group, would be preferred at this stage to develop arrangements. It was also concluded that, due to their elections taking place in May that the first meeting be held in mid-June, with 4 non-executive members from each Council forming the Task Group.
7. It is worth noting that the proposed joint Scrutiny of the SWLEP and its Strategic Economic Plan performance would not preclude the ability for the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee of either Swindon or Wiltshire Council to request the SWLEP to attend one of its meetings to address specific local matters should the need arise.

Recommendations

8. To review the proposed ways of moving forward with the governance arrangements of the SWLEP and agree the preferred option of an informal Task Group as the mechanism, in the first instance.
9. It is requested that the Committee confirm the appointment of 4 members to the Task Group, for a first meeting in mid-June.

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