

Wiltshire Council

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

23 July 2024

Task Group Update

1. Evolve Programme Task Group

Supporting officer: Simon Bennett

Membership

Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman)
Cllr Dr Monica Devendran
Cllr Ruth Hopkinson
Cllr Horace Prickett
Cllr Mark Verbinnen

Background

The Evolve programme involves the procurement and implementation of a new Cloud-based Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system for the council. The programme impacts on the work of all staff at the council in respect of HR, finance, procurement, and payroll processes. It looks 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 14 June 2024 to receive an update on the overall programme, including what issues remain to be resolved after 'go live' and progress on the transition into support.
- There are still several issues outstanding, many of which are complex and there is a desire not to transition problems onto the support teams. There are also parts of the system that need to be improved and system updates from Oracle that must be applied. Additional service desk support has been introduced some of cost of which is covered by savings on legacy systems being switched off.
- Issues that remain open include integrating some third party applications, implementing the financial reporting, traded services reporting and the housing benefit interface stability. Outstanding issues are impacting on when the programme will transition into support as it will not happen until issues are resolved.
- Considering the number of issues outstanding the task group has agreed to continue into the new year.

2. Stone Circle Governance Task Group

Supporting officer: Julie Bielby

Membership

Cllr Richard Britton
Cllr Richard Burden
Cllr Adrain Foster
Cllr Ruth Hopkinson (Chair)
Cllr Gordon King
Cllr Jacqui Lay
Cllr Tony Pickernell
Cllr Mike Sankey

Background

On 26 September 2023 the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee agreed 'To establish a task group to consider arrangements for scrutiny engagement on the council's activity in regard to its wholly owned Stone Circle companies and to bring proposals back to Committee'.

Terms of Reference

1. To consider how Overview and Scrutiny should provide effective and proportionate scrutiny of the council's activity in relation to its Stone Circle companies.

2. To consider what aspects of the Stone Circle companies and the council's exposure to them should be the focus of that scrutiny (e.g., financial implications and risks to the council, meeting housing needs etc).
3. To consider what information Overview and Scrutiny will need to deliver this scrutiny.
4. To bring recommendations regarding the matters above to OS Management Committee.

Recent Activity

- The task group met with Cllr Phil Alford, Andy Brown and Perry Holmes on 20 May to seek clarification on questions arising from their evidence review on 9 April.
- Members wanted to understand the relationship between the Council and Stone Circle companies in meeting housing need; the extent to which their interests were aligned, if there was any conflict of interest and whether housing could be scrutinised as a whole.
- A review of the most recent Stone Circle Business Plan prompted questions around performance and the process for weighing benefits against the risk and how this was managed.
- The need for greater awareness and transparency was emphasised.
- The group met on 26 June to review their findings and draft recommendations to be included in their report for OSMC for consideration in September.

3. Transformation Task Group

Supporting officer: Julie Bielby

Proposed membership

Cllr Graham Wright
Cllr Chris Williams
Cllr Jon Hubbard

Background

Following a presentation on the transformation service to OSMC, 15 November 2023, the Chair and Vice Chair agreed to explore the potential for further scrutiny of the programme. They propose setting up a task group to consider these options and to make recommendations for the committee to review.

Draft Terms of Reference

To explore and make recommendations on how to conduct effective scrutiny of the council's Transformation Programme, which should include scrutiny of the:

- a) *Selection of transformation projects (decision making criteria and process)*
- b) *Governance and oversight*
- c) *Delivery of business plan objectives and outcomes for residents*
- d) *Evaluation of success and learning from experience.*

Recent Activity

- Members met on 19 June 2024 to scope the work of the task group. They agreed to focus initially on the processes involved in the Transformation programme and the oversight and governance at each stage of the process to inform decision-making. They will be meeting with officers on 31 July 2024 to review the supporting evidence.

Report authors:

Simon Bennett, Senior Scrutiny Officer, simon.bennett@wiltshire.gov.uk

Julie Bielby, Senior Scrutiny Officer, julie.bielby@wiltshire.gov.uk

Henry Powell, Democracy and Complaints Manager, committee@wiltshire.gov.uk

Appendices

None