

6 WLEP 2021/22 Annual Report to Scrutiny Panel – OSPB Feedback

FAR COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The FAR Committee is asked to:

- Note the work that has been undertaken by WLEP Executive Team in preparing and presenting the 2021/22 Annual Report to the Accountable Body's Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (OSPB). This is in line with best practice, as outlined in the National Assurance Framework.
- Review and note the final comments and proposed actions following OSPB session for 2021/22.

6.1 Context

- 6.1.1 In July 2018, central government published their *Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships* report (National LEP Review), which included several recommendations for LEPs to implement.
- 6.1.2 One of these recommendations was to ensure each LEP puts in place appropriate scrutiny arrangements. The recommendation read as follows, *“the Government will support Local Enterprise Partnerships to set out how they will ensure external scrutiny and expert oversight, including participating in relevant local authority scrutiny panel enquiries to ensure effective and appropriate democratic scrutiny of their investment decisions.”*
- 6.1.3 As part of WLEP's Local Assurance Framework, it was agreed that the Accountable Body would provide external scrutiny and oversight functions to WLEP, via their Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (OSPB) arrangements.
- 6.1.4 WLEP presented their inaugural Annual Report to OSPB in May 2018. Subsequent annual reports have been provided to OPSB at physical meetings, except for 2020, which was delivered via a report circulated virtually, due to the impact of COVID-19 and associated social distancing restrictions.
- 6.1.5 The purpose of the annual scrutiny report is to outline the achievements of WLEP over the last 12 months and to outline strategic objectives for the forthcoming 12 months.

6.2 OSPB Feedback on WLEP Annual Scrutiny Report 2021/22

- 6.2.1 The WLEP Chair, CEO and Director of Operations attended OSPB alongside the Accountable Body's S151 nominated officer.
- 6.2.2 The report was well received by OSPB, with a slightly different dynamic taking place at the meeting than those held in the past, due to the OSPB Chair's decision to give far greater emphasis to Elected Member questions being posed to WLEP. This contrasted with spending the time on OSPB members receiving a verbal presentation with less time for questions and debate. The full minutes from the meeting can be accessed [here](#).
- 6.2.3 This stylistic change in format, led to some useful exchanges on a few key areas, in particular skills, innovation, and net zero. As a result, the OSPB provided a general endorsement of the LEP's revised economic strategy, the Plan for Growth (2020-2040).

6.2.4 Several actions were summarised at the end of the meeting, and these can be seen at Appendix 1.

6.3 Next Steps

6.3.1 WLEP anticipate that an invitation will be extended from OSPB for a further annual report in Autumn 2022, where an update on these actions will be reported.

6.3.2 WLEP Management Team will develop an implementation plan to address the actions identified at the OSPB and monitor regularly to progress.

Luke Willetts
Director of Operations

Appendix 1 – Summary of Actions from WLEP Annual Report to OSPB 2021/22

No.	Action	Owner
1	OSPB to be provided with a briefing on the financial impact of the WLEP	WLEP
2	The WLEP would consider working the Co-operative movement to support micro companies.	WLEP
3	In respect of the role of schools in signposting and promoting a variety of career choices to young people (not just university), the WLEP would consider ways in which to increase the marketing and promotion of jobs available to young people (and to signpost parents to these options too)	WLEP
4	The next annual update would include the WLEP's Climate Strategy.	WLEP
5	The WLEP would specifically promote coding skills and computer related technology jobs targeting women and girls.	WLEP
6	The WLEP would be invited to attend the March 2022 meeting of Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the discussion of Apprenticeships.	WLEP
7	Consideration would be given to including representatives from the Agri-tech business from Evesham on the sub-group of WLEP Board and also for a WLEP representative to visit them.	WLEP
8	WLEP would promote career resources in all high schools.	WLEP
9	WLEP would promote more of the success and good news stories in Worcestershire.	WLEP