

Marches enterprise joint committee	
Meeting date:	31 May 2016
Title of report:	Annual report of the marches enterprise joint committee

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is not a key decision.

Purpose

To approve an annual report of the first year of activity of the marches enterprise joint committee.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- (a) the annual report be approved; and**
- (b) the approved report be forwarded to the three partner councils' chief executives for reporting in accordance with their respective councils' constitutions.**

Reasons for recommendations

1. The joint committee constitution requires the committee to provide an annual report on its activities to the three partner councils.

Summary

2. The Marches Enterprise Joint Committee (MEJC), is a formal joint executive committee (established for the purposes of Part VI of the Local Government Act 1972 and Part 1, Chapter 2 of the Local Government Act 2000), formed in 2014 in preparation for the arrival of the first substantial public funds for the Marches LEP in April 2015. The constitution of the committee was approved by cabinets of the three partner councils and include a requirement to provide an annual report on the activities of the joint committee.
3. The MEJC provides democratic accountability for LEP decisions, ensuring that decisions meet with government public finance and accountability requirements. Decisions of the joint committee are subject to scrutiny by the three councils' scrutiny committees,

(Herefordshire Council General Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Shropshire Council Enterprise and Growth Scrutiny Committee and Telford and Wrekin Council Customer, Community and Partnership Scrutiny Committee).

4. Since its formation in 2014 the joint committee has met on only three occasions. The partnership's strategic economic plan (SEP), agreed by the partner councils' cabinets in March 2014, and the early programme of work, approved by Government in July 2014 against an agreed set of projects, pre-dated the formation of the joint committee; it is envisaged that, as funds now begin to flow the joint committee will be more active.
5. The Marches LEP's annual report, published on 27 April 2016, provides details of the broader range of work currently being undertaken by the LEP and aligned to the SEP. The report is available at:

http://www.marcheslep.org.uk/download/annual_report_and_annual_conference_2016/The-Marches-LEP-A4-20pp-Annual-Report-2016-SPREADS.pdf
6. During its first year of operation the MEJC has undertaken three key areas of work, as follows:
 - i. Oversight of the development and approval of the Marches Accountability & Assurance Framework. This is the essential governance document for the LEP that sets out, in a clear and transparent way, how the Marches LEP operates in terms of its decision-making, reporting & monitoring and management of public funds. Without this robust governance framework the LEP would be operating at risk.
 - ii. Approving allocation of the LEP's non-ring-fenced funds; specifically this has comprised of Marches Investment Fund (also known as Growing Places) loan allocations and the Skills Capital Funds which formed part of the LEP Growth Deal allocation in July 2014.
 - iii. Approving actions relating to the Telford Land Deal and the Hereford Enterprise Zone, both of which were considered at the MEJC meeting of 11 December 2014.
7. The joint committee complies with the regulations relating to executive decision making by publishing notices of forthcoming key decisions and ensuring that decision of the joint committee are subject to call in. During the period under review one decision (relating to the Marches enterprise zone) was called in by Herefordshire Council's general overview and scrutiny committee and, following thorough scrutiny and all questions having been responded to, the committee endorsed the decision making no further recommendations.

Alternative options

8. There are no alternative options; the committee is required to report on its activities.

Financial implications

9. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal implications

10. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Risks, opportunities and impacts

11. There are no specific risks or impacts related to the content of this report.

Consultation

12. None

Additional Information

13. None.

Appendices

None

Background papers

None identified