

Marches Enterprise Joint Committee	
Meeting date:	14 June 2017
Title of report:	Report of the Marches Enterprise Joint Committee

Classification

Open

Key decision:

This is not a key decision.

Purpose

To provide the second annual report on the activities of the Marches Enterprise Joint Committee.

Recommendation(s)

THAT the Joint Committee:

- (a) **agree the content of the report which can be used in updating their respective Council's on the work of the Committee.**

Summary

1. The Marches Enterprise Joint Committee (MEJC), is a formal joint committee of the three local authority leaders (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.
2. The MEJC provides democratic accountability for LEP Partnership Board recommendations, ensuring that decisions meet with government public finance and accountability requirements. Decisions of the Joint Committee are subject to scrutiny by the three local authority scrutiny committees, (Herefordshire Council General Scrutiny Committee, Shropshire Council Enterprise Growth and Scrutiny Committee and Telford and Wrekin Council Housing, Economy and Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee).
3. The Terms of Reference of the Marches Enterprise Joint Committee form Appendix 1 of this report. These Terms of Reference include the following Joint Committee

responsibility:

“(To) Provide an annual report on the activities of MEJC to the three partner councils”

4. The purpose of this report is to provide the details of the second year of activity of the Committee.
5. Over the past 12 months, the MEJC has been required to meet on four occasions and has undertaken five key areas of work, providing approval to LEP Board recommendations relating to:-
 - a. Updating the Marches Accountability & Assurance Framework, ensuring that it is compliant with requirements set out in the government's revised National 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.
 - b. The LEP application to becoming a Non-Constituent Member of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), including the £25k fee for 2016/17 financial year and to the LEP Chairman providing LEP representation at the WMCA Board and associated sub-groups. This course of action is being pursued to ensure that the Marches LEP is in a strong position to continue to influence regional policy, as appropriate, and to secure government funding to support Marches growth aspirations, as a non-constituent member.
 - c. The LEP's Growth Deal 3 submission. This was approved in March 2017, with a minimum allocation of £21.9m secured against the delivery of 5 strategic projects. Allocations against each individual project will be brought back to the MEJC for approval.
 - d. The LEP's approach in managing Growth Deal 1 & 2 Programme Delivery; specifically, the temporary virement of funds from one delayed project to another which was exceeding its delivery profile. This government-supported action ensured that the LEP met its requirements in utilising the full allocation of funding for the 2016/17 financial year and protected funding for the delayed government-approved Growth Deal project, which has since 'caught up' on project delivery and spend. This was considered by Dept. for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to demonstrate the Marches LEP's sound financial management of the Growth Deal programme.
 - e. The approval of a Scheme of Delegation for the Marches LEP. Developed and agreed by the Local Authority partner's three Heads of Legal Services, this Scheme of Delegation enables the LEP to undertake its business within the often significantly restricted timeframes required by Government and makes for a partnership that has a fast and flexible approach, whilst meeting the requirements for an accountable and transparent decision-making framework.
6. The Scheme of Delegation has been used once since it was approved by the Joint Committee. This related to the reallocation of Growth Deal 1 Skills Capital underspend, after the withdrawal of one Skills project. Following a procurement process, Shrewsbury Colleges and the Marches Centre for Manufacturing Technology (MCMT)

were awarded £57k each towards their independently appraised projects, set against their having been able to offer additional outputs from their projects.

7. The work of the MEJC continues to build. It is not possible to predict all areas of work well in advance. However, future planned areas of work during the current financial year include the refresh of the Marches Strategic Economic Plan and the commencement of delivery on Growth Deal 3. The Marches LEP's Annual Report, published on 11 May 2017, provides details of the range of work currently being undertaken by the LEP.

Alternative options

8. The government has encouraged Local Enterprise Partnerships to form Joint Committees or Economic Prosperity Boards to support transparency and accountability in governance and management of public funds.

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

- Appendix1: Marches Enterprise Joint Committee Terms of Reference

Reference

Annual Report of The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership 2017:

http://www.marcheslep.org.uk/download/annual_report_and_conference_2017/The-Marches-LEP-Annual-Report-2017_FINAL.pdf