

REPORT TO: AUDIT COMMITTEE

DATE: 27th FEBRUARY 2020

**REPORT TITLE: WECA MONITORING & EVALUATION FRAMEWORK
2020**

DIRECTOR: JESSICA LEE, HEAD OF STRATEGY & POLICY

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& PROJECTS**

Purpose of Report

- 1 To provide an updated WECA Monitoring & Evaluation Framework for Audit Committee approval.

Recommendation

- Audit Committee to approve the Monitoring & Evaluation Framework for 2020.

Background / Issues for Consideration

- 2 WECA's Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework sets out our overall approach to the monitoring and evaluation of activities across WECA and the Local Enterprise Partnership.
 - 2.1 As part of our devolution arrangements Government require us to submit an updated M&E framework relating to Investment-fund activity each year. This is included in our organisational M&E framework to ensure consistency of approach and to avoid duplication of effort.
 - 2.2 Our approach to monitoring and evaluation is based on the following principles:
 - Reporting requirements are locally defined and support delivery of local strategies
 - Evaluation is meaningful and proportionate
 - Data is collected once and used many times
 - Baseline information is consistent across key initiatives
 - Monitoring and evaluation is a core part of all activities
 - Lessons learned are used to inform future policy development

- 2.3 The draft M&E framework for 2020 is provided as appendix one to this report. It brings WECA's reporting requirements into a single document and sets out a reporting structure focused on the following:
- Delivery of the annual business plan which includes in-year activity to support WECA and the Local Enterprise Partnership. Our business plan for 2020/21 was approved by WECA and Joint Committee on 31st January 2020.
 - Project and Programme delivery, focused on schemes funded through the WECA Investment Fund, West of England One Front Door Programme and through other grant funds (e.g. Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport).
 - Longer term organisational impact, measured through the five-year gateway review, the first of which is due to take place during 2020.
- 2.4 An annexe to the document provides further details of specific evaluation approaches, where plans have not yet been completed and published.
- 2.5 WECA tracks a small number of regional indicators across the priorities of our Operating Framework. Whilst we do not have total control over these measures, we expect the activities set out in our business plan to contribute to positive change. These indicators were published with our 2020/21 business plan and are included as an annexe to the M&E plan.

Consultation

- 3 The M&E framework is updated annually each Autumn and is shared with Government. A draft was submitted in November 2019 which included some significant updates to reflect progress in bringing projects forwards, with links included to the M&E plans that are published as part of our Single Assurance Framework process.
- 3.1 Feedback from Government on the updated M&E framework has been positive, and noted that "overall, the document outlines a good monitoring strategy for the planned projects. It provides clear logic models, well specified data requirements and names the relevant SROs."

Other Options Considered

- 4 None. A monitoring and evaluation framework is both a requirement from Government, and is also good practice in ensuring consistency and efficiency of approach.

Risk Management/Assessment

- 5 Without a rigorous and consistent approach to monitoring and evaluation, we will be unable to demonstrate progress to meet the requirements of the 2020 Gateway Review.

Public Sector Equality Duties

- 6 The public sector equality duty created under the Equality Act 2010 means that public authorities must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

6.1 The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

6.2 The general equality duty therefore requires organisations to consider how they could positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations. It requires equality considerations to be reflected in the design of policies and the delivery of services, including policies, and for these issues to be kept under review.

6.3 There are no equality implications arising directly from this report. All projects are required to complete an equality impact assessment.

Finance Implications, including economic impact assessment where appropriate:

7 The monitoring and evaluation framework provides assurance that limited resources will be utilised to their best effect to ensure activity is appropriate and proportionate.

Advice given by: Malcolm Coe, Director of Investment and Corporate Services

Legal Implications:

8 Monitoring and evaluation is an essential part of the Combined Authority's governance. This report sets out the approach to be taken to evaluate the outcomes of our interventions.

Advice given by: Shahzia Daya, Director of Legal and Democratic Services

Climate Change Implications

9 On 19 July 2019, the West of England Combined Authority declared a climate emergency, recognising the huge significance of climate change and its impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of the region's residents. The Combined Authority is committed to taking climate change considerations fully into account as an integral part of its governance and decision making process.

Each report/proposal submitted for Combined Authority / Joint Committee approval is assessed in terms of the following:

Will the proposal impact positively or negatively on:

- * The emission of climate changing gases?
- * The region's resilience to the effects of climate change?
- * Consumption of non-renewable resources?

* Pollution to land, water or air?

Particular projects will also be subject to more detailed environmental assessment/consideration as necessary as part of their detailed project-specific management arrangements

- 9.1 Taking the above specifically into account, please comment on any climate change implications arising as a result of this report, and include details of any mitigation:
- 9.2 WECA will be producing a Climate Emergency Action Plan in early 2020 and this will include a monitoring and evaluation plan for the activities identified within it.

Land/property implications

10 None arising as a result of this report.

Advice given by: David Carter, Director of Infrastructure

Human Resources Implications:

111 None arising from this report. Monitoring and evaluation activity should be included in project resource and budget plans.

Advice given by: Alex Holly, Head of People and Assets

Appendices:

List any appendices to the report:

Appendix 1 – WECA Monitoring & Evaluation Plan 2020 (draft)

Appendix 2 – WECA Monitoring & Evaluation Plan Annex 1 (draft)

Appendix 3 – WECA Monitoring & Evaluation Plan Annex 2: Regional Indicators

Background papers:

WECA Monitoring & Evaluation Plan November 2018

West of England Combined Authority Contact:

Any person seeking background information relating to this item should seek the assistance of the contact officer for the meeting who is Ian Hird / Tim Milgate on 0117 332 1486; or by writing to West of England Combined Authority, 3 Rivergate, Temple Way, Bristol BS1 6ER; email: democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk