

**REPORT TO: WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY
AUDIT COMMITTEE**

DATE: 25 FEBRUARY 2021

REPORT TITLE: MONITORING & EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

DIRECTOR: JESSICA LEE, HEAD OF STRATEGY & POLICY

**AUTHOR: LYNDA BIRD, HEAD OF PERFORMANCE, PLANNING
& PROJECTS**

Purpose of Report

- 1 To report on the annual review and update of the WECA Monitoring & Evaluation Framework

Impact of Covid-19 pandemic

The Combined Authority has actively reviewed its key activities and work programme to reflect changing priorities as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Specific issues relating to the Covid-19 situation that impact on or are addressed through this report are as follows:

- Our monitoring and evaluation framework sets out our overall approach to the Monitoring & Evaluation of activities across WECA and the Local Enterprise Partnership. It sits alongside our annual business plan which is refreshed each year.
- Our annual business plan has been reviewed and updated to reflect the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and to bring together the activities in our Regional Recovery Plan, Climate Emergency Action Plan and Local Industrial Strategy. The business plan was approved by WECA and Joint Committee on 29 January 2021.
- We fully recognise that in these uncertain times we need to ensure we remain flexible to ensure that we can continue to support our residents and businesses. We will be monitoring delivery of our business plan as we move through the pandemic and will be providing quarterly progress reports to WECA and Joint Committee.

Recommendation

- Audit Committee are asked to endorse the Monitoring & Evaluation Framework for 2021.

Background / Issues for Consideration

- 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
- 2.1 The monitoring and evaluation framework brings together WECA's reporting requirements into one single document, with 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.
 - Project and Programme delivery, focused on schemes funded through the WECA Investment Fund, Transforming Cities 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 reviews.
- 2.2 We have reviewed our monitoring and evaluation framework and a draft for 2021 is included as an annex to this report. The basis of the framework remains unchanged, but for this year we have made some changes to remove duplication and strengthen the link between projects and strategic outcomes. These changes are detailed below.
- Signposting to published project list and monitoring and evaluation plans. We have previously included an appendix reproducing the logic models applied to different types of project. This somewhat academic approach was taken initially to support the set-up of the new combined authority. We can now signpost to a full list of published monitoring and evaluation plans on our website.
 - We have included the Strategic Outcomes that are now included in our business plan into our monitoring & evaluation plan, and demonstrate how these align into our core logic model.

Consultation

- 3 The monitoring and evaluation framework is updated annually and is shared with Government. Due to the pandemic the date for submission of a draft was postponed and we plan to share our draft following feedback and discussion with Audit Committee Members.

Other Options Considered

- 4 None. A monitoring and evaluation framework is 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 meet our statutory reporting requirements.

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 WECA has published a Climate Emergency Action Plan and we are now working with our Local Authority partners on an implementation approach, which will include a monitoring & evaluation plan.

Land/property Implications

- 10 *n/a*

Human Resources Implications:

- 11 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:

Appendix 1 – WECA Monitoring & Evaluation Plan 2021

Background papers: *n/a*

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 Quay, Bristol BS1 6EW; email: democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk