



**EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT COVER SHEET**

<b>Title of Report:</b>	Chairman of the Scrutiny (Promoting Local Economic Growth) Committee: Annual Report 2016/17
<b>Meeting of:</b>	Council
<b>Date:</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> March 2017
<b>Is this an Executive Decision:</b>	NO
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	NO
<b>Is the Report Confidential:</b>	NO
<b>If so, please state relevant paragraph from Schedule 12A LGA 1972:</b>	N/A
<p><b>Essential Signatories:</b></p> <p><b>ALL REPORTS MUST BE IN THE NAME OF A HEAD OF SERVICE</b></p> <p>Monitoring Officer: <b>Angela Wakefield</b></p> <p>Date ..... Signature .....</p> <p>Chief Finance Officer: <b>Sal Khan</b></p> <p>Date ..... Signature .....</p>	

**EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Report to Council**

**Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Chairman of the Scrutiny (Promoting Local Economic Growth) Committee: Annual Report 2016/17
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Leader of the Council
<b>HEAD OF SERVICE:</b>	Chief Executive
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	James Abbott (Programmes and Transformation Team Leader) x1244
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	Non-specific

**1. Purpose of the Report**

1.1. To provide a summary of the Scrutiny activities undertaken by the Scrutiny (Promoting Local Economic Growth) Committee during 2016/17.

**2. Background**

2.1. The Council's various Scrutiny Committees discharge the overview and scrutiny function under Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

2.2. The Committees are tasked with:

2.2.1. Reviewing and/or scrutinising decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;

2.2.2. Reviewing and scrutinising the performance of the Council;

2.2.3. Serving as consultees in relation to executive decisions and key elements of service plans when required; and

2.2.4. Producing progress reports and recommendations to the Executive arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process or refer to the Executive

entire reports produced as a result of the scrutiny process. However it is the decision of the Executive whether or not such a report is subsequently submitted to Full Council.

### **3. Contribution to Corporate Priorities**

3.1. This report can contribute to all priorities to some degree (depending on the subject matter of the scrutiny review in question); however the remit of this particular Scrutiny Committee is to consider services within the corporate priority area of “Promoting Local Economic Growth”.

### **4. Scrutiny Activities**

#### **4.1. Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP)**

4.1.1. In addition to scrutinising the standing items of the Corporate Plan Performance Report and Executive Decision Records, the Committee undertook a review of the benefits realised from the Council’s membership of the GBSLEP.

4.1.2. This was an in-depth analysis of a range of factors including looking at the type and levels of funding available via the LEP, and the benefits realised by East Staffordshire Borough Council and local businesses in the area.

4.1.3. The review also analysed the considerations made when joining the GBSLEP; governance arrangements within the LEPs; economic profiles of the GBSLEP, Stoke & Staffordshire LEP (SSLEP) and Derby / Derbyshire & Nottingham / Nottinghamshire LEP (D2N2) areas; and Business Rate pooling arrangements within the GBSLEP.

4.1.4. Following completion of the review, a report was presented to the Cabinet in July 2016.

4.1.5. The Committee concluded that there were no material recommendations arising from the review. However the report presented to the Cabinet recommended that Committee keeps a watching brief over the benefits realised from the Council’s membership of the GBSLEP.

#### **4.2. Business Formation Rates.**

4.2.1. In June 2016 the Committee agreed to carry out a review of the Business Formation Rate in East Staffordshire.

4.2.2. This followed on from the GBSLEP review, which contained some information on business formation rates in the Borough, in order to look at formation rates in more detail.

4.2.3. This included reviewing how formation rates are measured, what the Council does to encourage and support new businesses and what other

organisations within the Borough are doing to support business formation.

4.2.4. This review is ongoing with recommendations arising to be discussed at future meetings of the Committee.

#### 4.3. Burton Railway Station

4.3.1. The Committee continues to keep a watching brief over Burton upon Trent Railway Station following concerns previously being raised on the general appearance and landscaping at the station, and is receiving regular updates from East Midlands Trains on their ongoing programme of improvements.

4.3.2. This included a representative of East Midlands Trains attending the June 2016 meeting of the committee to provide in-depth detail of the improvements made and to receive ideas for potential future improvements from the Committee.

4.3.3. The Committee has received assurances from East Midlands Trains that they have been working to enhance their customer service through staff development and an increased presence to ensure personnel are always present when trains arrive. Cycle storage has been improved, a deep clean has taken place and improvements made to the garden area at platform level.

4.3.4. The feasibility of further improvements are being investigated by East Midlands Trains and the Committee will continue to receive regular updates.

### 5. Financial Considerations

*This section has been approved by the following member of the Financial Management Unit: Lisa Turner*

5.1. There are no financial issues arising from this Report.

### 6. Risk Assessment and Management

6.1. The main risks to this Report and the Council achieving its objectives are as follows:

6.1.1. **Positive** (Opportunities/Benefits):

6.1.1.1. None

6.1.2. **Negative** (Threats):

6.1.2.1. None

6.2. The risks do not need to be entered in the Risk Register. Any financial implications to mitigate against these risks are considered above.

## **7. Legal Considerations**

*This section has been approved by the following member of the Legal Team:  
**Angela Wakefield.***

7.1. There are no significant legal issues arising from this Report.

## **8. Equalities and Health**

8.1. Equality impacts: The subject of this Report is not a policy, strategy, function or service that is new or being revised. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.

8.2. Health impacts: The outcome of the health screening question does not require a full Health Impact Assessment to be completed. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.

## **9. Human Rights**

9.1. There are no Human Rights issues arising from this Report.

## **10. Sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures)**

10.1. Does the proposal result in an overall positive effect in terms of sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures)  
**N/A**

## **11. Recommendation(s)**

11.1. To note the report

## **12. Background Papers**

12.1. None

## **13. Appendices**

13.1. Appendix 1: Scrutiny (Promoting Local Economic Growth) Committee Reviews 2016/17.

## Appendix 1: Scrutiny (Promoting Local Economic Growth) Committee Reviews 2016/17

### Benefits Realised from GBSLEP Membership

#### Background and Scope

At the meeting of the Promoting Local Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 18th June 2015, it was agreed that the committee would scrutinise the benefits the Council has realised as a result of its Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) membership. The following questions were suggested by the Committee in order to provide a focus for this review. The Committee was not limited to answering only the questions below.

1. Which LEPs were originally considered by the Council?
2. What were the reasons for joining the GBSLEP?
3. What evidence was taken into consideration when making the decision?
4. Is the original decision making criteria still relevant?
5. Have circumstances changed within the LEPs that were considered at the time?
6. Is it possible to belong to more than one LEP?
  - a) If yes, what are the benefits and drawbacks of belonging to more than one LEP?
7. Benefits of LEP Membership
  - a) What benefits has East Staffordshire Borough Council realised as a result of its GBSLEP membership?
  - b) What benefits have East Staffordshire businesses realised as a result of the Council's GBSLEP membership?
8. How are businesses able to influence the GBSLEP?
9. What are the Business Rate pooling arrangements within GBSLEP?
10. What are the Business Rate pooling arrangements within the other LEPs that were initially considered?
11. What funding has been obtained from the LEPs to date?
  - a) Grants
  - b) Loans
  - c) Capital
  - d) Revenue
12. How much funding has each LEP received?

## Recommendations Arising

The information identified in the scope of the review was collated and a comprehensive report was compiled. The recommendations included in the report presented to Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2016 are as follows:

- That the report be noted.
- That the committee keeps a watching brief on the benefits the Council receives as part of its GBSLEP membership.

## Business Formation Rates

### Background and Scope

Following a discussion held at the Promoting Local Economic Growth Scrutiny meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016 a decision was made to carry out a review of the Business Formation Rate in East Staffordshire.

This follows the '*Scrutiny Review of the benefits realised from membership of GBSLEP*' which showed for 2014, East Staffordshire had a business formation rate slightly lower than the national business formation rate.

The following questions were compiled as a result of discussions held at the Scrutiny meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016.

1. How is the Business Formation Rate measured? (What is the statistic based on?)
2. Is there a better statistic to measure new businesses?
3. What was the impact of the Business Development Fund on businesses within East Staffordshire?
4. What does East Staffordshire Borough Council do towards encouraging and supporting new businesses?
5. What are other organisations within the Borough doing to support business formation?
6. Is there any duplication with Staffordshire County Council?
7. Is there a website for new businesses where all the information is available in one place?
8. What premises/facilities are available for new businesses within the Borough and how do costs compare to elsewhere?
9. How do business rates within East Staffordshire impact on new businesses? Is there any rate relief available?
10. Are there any variations around the Borough?

## Recommendations Arising

This review is ongoing, with recommendations to be discussed at future meetings of the Committee.