



REPORT TO:	Environment & Performance Committee
DATE:	25 July 2023
SUBJECT:	Proposed joint scrutiny activity for 23/24 for the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (S&ELCP)
PURPOSE:	To approve the scoping document for the proposed joint scrutiny topic for 23/24; and to agree the appointment of three Members to the Joint Task and Finish Group.
KEY DECISION:	No
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Anne Dorrian, Leader of the Council
REPORT OF:	James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate
REPORT AUTHOR:	Rebecca James, Scrutiny & Policy Officer
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	None
EXEMPT REPORT?	No

SUMMARY

This report outlines the proposed joint scrutiny topics for the Partnership for 23/34 and the establishment of a Joint Task and Finish Group for each topic.

The topics included have previously been considered by scrutiny committees at each Council, but this report brings forward more detail on each topic and requests appointments to the Joint Task Groups.

Appendix A provides an overview of the proposed Partnership scrutiny work plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) That the topic and associated scope, as set out at **Appendix B**, be agreed, with the Task and Finish Group authorised to review the scope and determine the detailed lines of enquiry and witnesses;
- b) That the Committee agrees to appoint three Members to the proposed Task and Finish Group identified in **Appendix B**.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

A co-ordinated approach to matters of common strategic interest is a significant benefit to the S&ELCP and its constituent councils.

The proposed topics for scrutiny were considered by scrutiny committees prior to the local elections and are being presented again for Member consideration, alongside the need to appoint to the Joint Task and Finish Groups.

The ability to jointly scrutinise is important in shaping Partnership policy.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Do nothing: not recommended – this approach would not support the development of joint policy or enable the Councils to collectively scrutinise issues of common interest.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In establishing the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership, Members of each of the partnership councils recognised that matters of common strategic interest would benefit from a co-ordinated partnership approach to scrutiny.
- 1.2 The establishment of the joint scrutiny framework, to consider matters in depth from a Partnership perspective, has resulted in the development of Policy; as well as enabling the Partnership to collectively explore issues facing the sub-region (such as transportation).
- 1.3 At the end of the last municipal year, scrutiny committees across all 3 Councils considered a list of potential scrutiny items for the 23/24 year (**Appendix A**). The topics identified for scrutiny were Health and Wellbeing, Housing, and Enviro Crime, with Public Transport scrutiny continuing from 2022/23. The proposed scope for the new topic relevant to this committee can be found at **Appendices B**. It is proposed that the Health & Wellbeing Task and Finish Group be the first to commence its work, with a change to the work programme following consultation with new Councillors that we will not be reconvening the Public Transport task group at this time.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The agreed approach is that each Council's relevant scrutiny committee should appoint up to three Members to a Joint Task and Finish Group for any given topic. Each agreed topic will have its own Joint Task and Finish Group.
- 2.2 The 'parent' scrutiny committees will agree the broad remit of the Joint Task and Finish Groups, but each Group will have a delegation to determine the detailed lines of enquiry/witnesses. A Lead Officer will be appointed by the relevant Deputy Chief Executive, and that Lead Officer will support the Group and will prepare any final report with the Group.
- 2.3 Final reports will be submitted to each council's parent scrutiny committee for final review and subsequent recommendation on to the relevant decision-making person/body, as appropriate.

- 2.4 It should be noted that two of the councils have more than one 'parent' scrutiny committee. The approval of topics and the appointment of Members to Joint Task and Finish Groups will be determined by the parent committee whose terms of reference most closely reflect the topic in question – but with the overarching aim of equal distribution of topics between those parent committees as far as practicable.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 This report seeks approval of the establishment of Joint Task and Finish Groups; the topics for Joint Scrutiny and agreement to appoint 3 members to each of those groups.

4. EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP

- 4.1 Collaborative working on areas of strategic importance.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL'S PARTNERSHIP

- 5.1.1 The approach proposed in this report fully supports the strategic objectives of the S&ELCP.

5.2 CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 5.2.1 Joint Task and Finish Groups will be established to address joint strategic objectives of the S&ELCP.

5.3 STAFFING

- 5.3.1 There will be some additional meetings which will have an impact on Officer and Member time. However, in light of feedback from previous scrutiny chairs, the number of Joint Task and Finish groups is at present limited to a maximum of four per year.

5.4 CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.4.1 All recommendations arising from Joint Task and Finish Groups will be reported to each sovereign council's parent scrutiny committee. If supported, those recommendations will then be considered by the relevant decision-maker for each sovereign council. As such, the process is legally and constitutionally sound.

5.5 DATA PROTECTION

- 5.5.1 It is likely that most of the work of Joint Task and Finish Groups will not involve the use of personal data. However, should personal data be processed, each of the councils have appropriate technical and organisational measures in place to protect the same. There are also suitable protocols in place between the councils.

5.6 FINANCIAL

- 5.6.1 There are unlikely to be any significant financial implications. There may be a small additional cost in terms of the cost of travel and venue hire (if required).

5.7 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 5.7.1 None at this stage.

5.8 STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES

5.8.1 The Partnership Scrutiny Work Programme was developed and agreed in consultation with scrutiny committees across the partnership.

5.9 REPUTATION

5.9.1 Successful delivery of joint scrutiny, which leads to improved strategic outcomes, will be important to the reputation of the S&ELCP.

5.10 CONTRACTS

5.10.1 None at this stage.

5.11 CRIME AND DISORDER

5.11.1 None at this stage.

5.12 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING

5.12.1 None at this stage.

5.13 HEALTH AND WELL BEING

5.13.1 None at this stage.

5.14 CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

5.14.1 None at this stage – although the outcome of scrutinising various topics has the potential to impact positively on climate change and environmental matters.

6. ACRONYMS

6.1 S&ELCP South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

APPENDICES

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -

APPENDIX A	23/34 draft work programme
APPENDIX B	Enviro Crime

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body
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REPORT APPROVAL

Report author:	Rebecca James - Scrutiny and Policy Officer
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Signed off by:	James Gilbert - Assistant Director - Corporate
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Approved for publication:	CLlr Anne Dorrian - Leader of the Council
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