

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: ***C-052-2023/24***

Date of meeting: ***18/03/2024***



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: **Cllr C Whitbread, Leader of Council**

Subject: **Fit for the Future Transformation Portfolio, Governance**

Responsible Officer: **Georgina Blakemore, Chief Executive**

Democratic Services Officer: **V Messenger (democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)**

1. Recommendations/Decisions Required:

To agree the proposed governance structure for the Fit for the Future Transformation Portfolio, laid out within this report and Appendix F.

2. Executive Summary:

Fit for the Future is a portfolio of transformation activity over the next 4 years (2024-2027), ensuring that the Council can continue to operate within its financial means and deliver services that residents and businesses need.

This report provides an outline of the Council's proposed Fit for the Future Transformation Portfolio Governance.

The report sets out a structure for transformation that is intended to ensure good governance, with decisions at the lowest level possible and with oversight from Members and Officers at the highest level.

2.1 Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The proposed structure incorporates existing groups and processes to ensure most effective use of resources and to capitalise on successful approaches to advice and decision-making already in place.

The existing officer groups and processes outlined in Appendix F, have proven to encourage better service delivery and improved accountability, whilst supporting any needed interventions to achieve the intended outcomes. They also provide structure to manage risk and performance through robust internal control including standard tools and processes to enable change to be delivered against agreed quality, time, and cost objectives.

The proposed structure utilises existing member governance through Cabinet for due decision making and Scrutiny for appropriate challenge.

2.2 Other Options for Action:

An alternative option would be to design a new governance structure, with the creation of additional boards, groups and committees, with this portfolio sitting outside of the existing governance model. This option is not recommended as it would be duplication in terms of time and resource, when the existing structures are sufficient and appropriate.

3. Report:

3.1 The Fit for the Future Transformation Portfolio Cabinet report (Appendix G) and its recommendations were approved at a Cabinet meeting on 5th February 2024.

3.2 Fit for the Future is a portfolio of transformation activity over the next 4 years (2024-2027), ensuring that the Council can continue to operate within its financial means and deliver services that residents and businesses need.

3.3 The approved Budget agreed by Council on 5 February 2024 included provision for the creation of a Reserve of up to £3 million to offset the one-off costs associated with the implementation of the programme.

3.4 This report provides an outline of the Council's proposed Fit for the Future Transformation Portfolio Governance and how approvals for spending will be sought.

3.5 The report sets out a structure for transformation that is intended to ensure good governance, with decisions at the lowest level possible and with oversight from Members and Officers at the highest level.

3.6 The proposed structure incorporates existing groups and processes to ensure most effective use of resources and to capitalise on successful approaches to advice and decision-making already in place.

3.7 The Council's Governance arrangements represent good practice, are robust and regularly tested and reviewed. Commitment of expenditure is controlled by Financial Regulations and a scheme of delegations. Spending above designated thresholds needs to be authorised by increasingly senior individuals or democratic bodies and spend committed as part of this programme will need to comply with this, and the Council's proper procurement rules.

3.8 The Council monitors all spending through Quarterly Reporting to Overview and Scrutiny and to Cabinet. Performance monitoring is also undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny. Overview and Scrutiny, together with the Place and Community Scrutiny Committees set their own work programmes and have the ability to add individual aspects of the transformation programme, or the entire programme, to their forward plans for scrutiny.

3.9 Please refer to Appendix F to review the proposed governance structure.

4. Scrutiny Comments

This governance structure proposal report has not been presented to a scrutiny panel.

5. Resource Implications:

The recommended approach will have a minimal impact on resources, as the groups and processes already exist within the organisation.

6. Legal and Governance Implications:

None at present, as the report is based on governance.

7. Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

None at present.

8. Consultation / Scrutiny Undertaken:

None for this report.

9. Background Papers:

Appendices

Appendix F – Fit for the Future Transformation Portfolio Governance slide deck
[Appendix G – Fit for the Future Transformation Portfolio Cabinet report 5 Feb '24 and its Appendices, A-E.](#)

10. Risk Management:

No risks identified regarding this report.

11. Equality:

At this stage there are no direct implications. A full Equality Impact Assessment will be conducted at a programme level and included within the appropriate Cabinet report.