

One Swindon: Governance

**August 2013
(Final Report)**

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Report Distribution – Final Report issued on 30th August 2013

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Executive Summary

Background

This review has been carried out as part of the agreed Internal Audit Plan in order to provide assurance to the Chief Executive of Swindon Borough Council that the governance structure in place for the One Swindon Partnership is fit for purpose and operating effectively.

The One Swindon Partnership is a non-statutory, strategic partnership between the public, voluntary and business sectors, to deliver innovative, jointly developed solutions to improve the outcomes for the residents of Swindon. The partnership builds on the work already undertaken through the Swindon Strategic Partnership and the Local Area Agreement.

A number of Members, Partners and SBC officers involved in One Swindon were interviewed to gain their understanding of, and observations on, the Partnership. This was supported by a review of the terms of references and minutes/documentation from the Leadership Board, Delivery Board, the Overview and Monitoring Group and the Swindon Conference to ascertain their roles and responsibilities and confirm that they were delivering against these. The Auditors also attended the One Swindon Leadership Board on the 19th March 2013 as observers.

Audit Opinion

The impact and materiality of One Swindon is considered to be **high** and combined with the auditor's opinion that **significant improvements are required** to system controls, gives an overall risk assessment to the Council of '**Of Concern**'.

Key Messages

All those interviewed were enthusiastic about the concept of One Swindon and the benefits it could achieve, as organisations involved in the partnership face similar pressures to that of the Council with regards to increasing demand and reducing resources. The principles of One Swindon was understood and supported by everyone interviewed during the course of the audit. The current governance structure, except for the role of the Overview and Management Group, is considered fit for purpose.

Members of the Leadership and Delivery Boards all gave examples of where the networking opportunities at Board meetings have allowed them to resolve issues being experienced within their own organisations and saw this as a real benefit.

However, the track record over the last few years has not yet fully realised the potential in terms of One Swindon intent, nor been in keeping with the benefits previously delivered through the Local Area Agreement. This view was shared by all those interviewed during the audit.

There is currently no Delivery Plan in place for year two and beyond. This has been identified by the Leadership Board and was very evident from the discussions at the Leadership Board attended and previous minutes/documentation reviewed. All Partners

have acknowledged that the need for the Partnership to move on and deliver has become critical if it is to maintain momentum and deliver projects that bring both benefits to the organisations involved and deliver the outcomes needed for residents. Everyone attending the Leadership Board on the 19th March 2013 was of the same view and supported the need to be delivery focussed.

It is nationally recognised that Community Budgets are a way forward for local authorities and partners across the public sector. Partnership working and place shaping will be important for local authorities going forward, especially working with partners across public, private and the voluntary/third sector. The One Swindon Partnership already embodies these ideas and has the potential to make a big, positive contribution towards all Partner organisations and residents through Community Budgets.

The Council's Chief Executive has proposed that the Community Budget approach would be an ideal opportunity to allow the Partnership to be focussed on specific outcomes. This has been agreed by the Board and the Council's Head of Strategy and Research has been commissioned to lead and manage the development and implementation of a One Swindon Community Budget as a Programme. He reported back to the Board as part of their away day in June 2013. This away day was dedicated to discussions on the Community Budget Programme and what it could/would look like for Swindon.

Swindon has since been selected by the Government as one of only nine local authorities to be included in the next wave of Community Budgets. It was reported that Swindon was selected because of the strength of our partnership working and track record of innovation.

To respond to this approach effectively, it will be necessary for the Leadership Board to now take on the role of a commissioning body, approving projects within the strategic framework they have set, with the Delivery Board taking on the role of a robust performance management function to monitor and ensure projects are delivered.

Context

Originally, in response to government legislation, the Swindon Strategic Partnership was set up in 2003. The Partnership produced a Vision for Swindon 2008-2030. This is the baseline document against which strategies and policies should be designed to deliver the vision.

In 2011 the One Swindon Partnership was created and effectively took over from the Strategic Partnership. The One Swindon Partnership exists to:

- Hold the strategic vision for Swindon
- Deliver the One Swindon outcomes
- Promote effective multi-agency working across Swindon¹

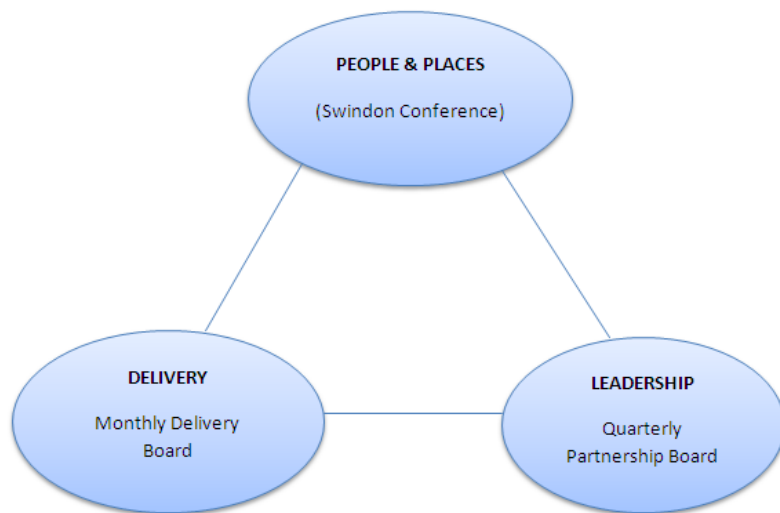
Initially, One Swindon developed four priorities which link through to the overall Vision for the Swindon 2008-30 document:

- We can all benefit from a growing economy and a better town centre
- I like where I live
- Everyone is enjoying sport, leisure and cultural opportunities
- Living independently, protected from harm, leading healthy lives and making a positive contribution

One Swindon Partners include:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Swindon Borough Council | • Wiltshire Fire and Rescue | • Wiltshire Probation Trust |
| • Job Centre Plus | • Wiltshire and Swindon Police | • Voluntary Action Swindon |
| • NHS Swindon | • SEQOL | • Influence (representing business) |
| • Clinical Commissioning Group | | |

¹ Source – One Swindon Website



The governance structure for One Swindon comprises three pillars:

- ✓ *Leadership* (quarterly Partnership Board meetings)
- ✓ *Delivery* (monthly Delivery Board meetings) and
- ✓ *People and Places* (bi-annual Conferences, emerging locality partnerships and networks). Among the responsibilities attributed to People and Places is to drive the agenda and hold the Partnership to account. The three pillars have differing relationships with each other.

Figure 1: One Swindon Governance Structure (August 2011)

The relationships between the pillars are:

- Leadership and Delivery Board – translation of strategy into delivery,
- People and Places with the Leadership Board – shaping and grounding strategic direction and inspiring and removing barriers to community contribution.
- Delivery Board and People and Places – the understanding of local priorities and capabilities and connecting community capacity to deliver

The role of the One Swindon Partnership is becoming increasingly more important in the current financial and economic climate. It is impossible for one organisation to deliver all that is required of it, or wishes to deliver, without working in partnership with other organisations, including the business community.

Risk Areas Examined and Findings

In accordance with best practice, a risk-based approach was adopted that identified the key risks to the business objectives and those mitigating actions/controls that should be in place. The Auditor then assessed the effectiveness of the mitigating controls through examination of relevant documents, procedures and detailed testing.

The key risks to the achievement of the business objectives were discussed and agreed with the Chief Executive before the commencement of the audit. The table below summarises the risk areas examined during the review and provides an assessment of the adequacy of controls in place for each area of risk examined:

<i>Risk Area Examined and Findings</i>	<i>Audit Conclusion</i>
<p>Risk: Corporate governance Fit for purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Leadership Board and Delivery Board linkage was understood by all those interviewed and are considered appropriate. • Through the Local Area Agreement, the Partnership has demonstrated that it is able to deliver benefits for all organisations involved and residents. • The role of the Swindon Conference within the One Swindon governance structure is not fully understood and no terms of reference exist for it. (AP 1.7) • There was no, or very limited, understanding of the role and contribution of the Overview and Management Group (OMG). (AP 1.8) • The relationship between the One Swindon Partnership Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board should be considered and agreed, as there is potential for significant overlap between these two Boards. (AP 1.2) • There is an absence of performance management over delivery within the One Swindon Partnership. For example, the Leadership Board's terms of reference are not regularly reviewed and do not include any requirement for performance reporting or monitoring of the Delivery Board (AP 1.5) 	<p>Satisfactory</p>

Risk Area Examined and Findings	Audit Conclusion
<p>Risk: Corporate governance Operating effectively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swindon and Wiltshire, via a bid put together by the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership, were recently awarded a City Deal package by the Government. These deals are to aid in the economic re-generation of the local economy. The existence of the One Swindon Partnership is believed to have contributed to this award as it demonstrates strong partnership and political will to work together. Including Swindon in the second wave of Community Budget pilots was also on the basis of the strength of our partnership working and track record of innovation. • One of the common benefits of One Swindon, quoted by those interviewed, is the networking opportunities it offers, giving Partners other points of contact when developing projects or re-modelling services. • One Swindon is not delivering effectively at present. However, this has been recognised by all partners and they are engaged in addressing this and ensuring that going forward, the Partnership delivers to its own high expectations and intentions. The SBC Chief Executive has identified Community Budgets as the mechanism that will make One Swindon deliver more and meet its priorities. To assist with this, some basic enablers need to be put in place. These were outlined in the paper, "One Swindon: One Vision – Translating Vision to Action", presented to the Leadership Board by the Chief Officer of the Clinical Commissioning Group. The Board agreed that these enablers should be put in place. (AP 1.1) • A detailed delivery plan, linked to the One Swindon priorities and outcomes, is not in place for 2013/14 and beyond. (AP 1.4). Although it is not formally documented, it is understood that 2013/14 is being used to prepare for a new approach utilising the Community Budget concept. • The Delivery Board is expected to meet monthly but prior to the February 2013 meeting, it had not met since May 2012. • There was a feeling of disconnection between the concept of One Swindon and what it meant to officers delivering on the ground. Many interviewed felt that what they were undertaking would happen even if One Swindon was not in place. • Currently there are no criteria to demonstrate whether One Swindon is successful and delivering against its stated outcomes and priorities and how successful delivery of projects has changed the organisations concerned and improved the outcomes for residents. (AP 1.3) • There is no current, up to date risk register for One Swindon to manage the risks facing the Partnership. With the introduction of Community Budgets and the increased focus on delivering, effective risk management will be vital. (AP 1.6) • The minutes of the Leadership Board did not indicate that any previously agreed actions were reviewed to ensure appropriate progress had been made in line with any timescales agreed. However, it is understood that brief notes and action points are prepared by the Partnership Development Officer and are sent to Board members within 2 days of the meeting with formal minutes produced subsequently. 	<p>Significant improvements required</p>

Overall Opinion

Materiality and impact: High. To date the materiality of One Swindon has been limited, but going forward it could be significant. With joint partnership working through such things as community budgets, there is the potential to make significant savings and re-invest this back into front line services to benefit partners and residents, not just the Council. On this basis materiality is therefore considered as high. In the current economic situation, which has led to significant reductions in funding to the public sector, partnership working is essential. Without partnership working, including that with the private and voluntary sector, the public sector will not be able to deliver outcomes needed for their residents, One Swindon's impact is therefore high.

Opinion on system controls: Significant improvements required (see Appendix A) i.e. the Auditor completing the review concluded that existing procedures needed to be improved to ensure that they are fully reliable. A number of significant recommendations have been made to improve missing or failing controls.

Overall assessment of risk: the combination of the high impact of the system, along with the opinion on the system controls gives an overall risk assessment to the Council as being **of concern**:

		MATERIALITY AND IMPACT		
SYSTEM CONTROL		High	Medium	Low
1	High standard	Moderate	Minimal	Minimal
2	Satisfactory	Moderate	Moderate	Minimal
3	Significant Improvements required	Of Concern	Moderate	Moderate
4	Fundamental weaknesses identified	Significant	Of Concern	Moderate

Action Plan

The purpose of this action plan is to provide a summary of the matters arising during the audit of the governance arrangements for the One Swindon Partnership, together with the recommendations to mitigate risks, the manager's response to the recommendations, along with the officer responsible and timescale for implementation. In order for you to identify the most significant matters arising, which affect the reliance that can be placed on the controls reviewed, the recommendations have been prioritised.

Ref.	Finding	Recommendations Priority (High/Medium/Low)	Responsible Officer and Timescale	Management Response
1	<i>Risk: Corporate Governance</i>			
1.1	<p>The future of One Swindon</p> <p>At the Leadership Board in March 2013, the Chief Executive (SBC) described the partnership as being at a tipping point. Explaining that if change is not embraced and evidence of partnership working brought to the fore, the future of the partnership had to be in some doubt. He saw the vehicle for change as utilising the concept of community budgets.</p> <p>This was echoed in interviews held with Senior Officers and Partners, held prior to the Board meeting, where a common concern was that the Partnership was too aspirational which had led to little being actually delivered. Those interviewed felt that it was now necessary for the Partnership to focus on one or two specific smaller projects in order to demonstrate that outcomes can be achieved and additional benefits can result through working in Partnership.</p> <p>At the same meeting a paper entitled "One Swindon: One Vision – Translating Vision to Action" was presented by the Chief Officer, Clinical Commissioning Group. This highlighted some of the enablers currently missing that would make One Swindon more effective e.g. shared approaches to intelligence and analysis, change management, project management and service re-design and a commitment to integration and governance. The paper recognised the need for the Leadership Board to be more proactive and set out some of the future challenges for One Swindon, especially the need to commit to joint partnership working and for partners to come forward with business cases for review, challenge and implementation. Attendees at the meeting supported this approach and the need for the basic enablers to be put in place.</p>	<p>The enablers outlined in the paper "One Swindon: One Vision – Translating Vision to Action" should be introduced.</p> <p>Priority: High</p>	<p>Head of Strategy and Research</p> <p>March 2014</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Work has already started on enabling work with GWH.</p>

Ref.	Finding	Recommendations Priority (High/Medium/Low)	Responsible Officer and Timescale	Management Response
1	<i>Risk: Corporate Governance</i>			
1.2	<p>Relationship with the Health and Wellbeing Board With the responsibility for public health returning to local authorities under the Government's NHS reforms, a Health and Wellbeing Board was set up as a committee of the Council. This Board remit is the wellbeing of residents and reducing health inequalities to improve outcomes for residents.</p> <p>There is potential for significant overlap between this Board and the One Swindon Board, as the wellbeing of residents is the key focus for both.</p> <p>Nationally there are varied solutions to this, with some Authorities choosing to merge the two bodies as they see it as a way of broadening the agenda of the Health and Wellbeing Board to include more social determinants of health.</p>	<p>The relationship between the One Swindon Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board should be defined.</p> <p>Consideration should be given as to whether it would be more effective to combine both Boards to ensure common goals are achieved effectively and to minimize duplication.</p> <p>Priority: High</p>	<p>Head of Strategy and Research</p> <p>October 2013</p>	<p>Agreed. We are in the process of defining what this could look like moving forward</p>

Ref.	Finding	Recommendations Priority (High/Medium/Low)	Responsible Officer and Timescale	Management Response
1	<i>Risk: Corporate Governance</i>			
1.3	<p>What does success look like</p> <p>The One Swindon priorities, outcomes and areas of focus detailed in the draft delivery plan give an indication of the areas expected to improve. However, this is not quantified with any specific measurable targets. Consequently, there are currently no set targets which will indicate progress/success of One Swindon.</p> <p>The 2012 Residents Survey should establish a base line in residents' views and could be used to measure the success of the One Swindon Partnership provided the questions in the survey can be clearly linked to the One Swindon Priorities.</p> <p>An extract from the Staffordshire Strategic Partnership's December 2012 progress report can be found at Appendix C. This clearly sets out what the Partnership is trying to achieve, actions they are taking, the Partners involved, challenges to success, the difference it is expecting to make now and in future and the next steps.</p>	<p>The 2012 Residents Survey should be considered as a baseline for measuring the progress of the One Swindon Partnership, along with any other relevant data available.</p> <p>Once baselines have been identified, targets should be set outlining the improvements expected through the One Swindon Partnership and the timescales.</p> <p>This will allow the Council to demonstrate that the One Swindon Partnership is moving in the right direction and making the difference expected.</p> <p>Priority: High</p>	<p>Head of Strategy and Research</p> <p>July 2013</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>The One Swindon annual report will do what the Staffs SSP progress report does.</p> <p>This report went to the One Swindon Board in June 2013 and full Council and partner boards in July 2013.</p> <p>There was also a session with Corporate Board, 8th July 2013, to ensure that One Swindon is fulfilling its potential.</p>

Ref.	Finding	Recommendations Priority (High/Medium/Low)	Responsible Officer and Timescale	Management Response
1	<i>Risk: Corporate Governance</i>			
1.4	<p>Delivery Plans</p> <p>There is a draft high level plan on the One Swindon website but it does not include specific projects to show how the plan will be achieved and the expected timescales. The current version on the website states that it is still in draft.</p> <p>No detailed year one plan was provided during the audit, although there was an annual report on delivery produced in July 2012. It has not been possible to confirm that the outcomes detailed in the annual report were as intended, due to the absence of a detailed delivery plan and lack of performance reporting. Consequently, it has not been possible to determine how successful the Partnership was in year one.</p> <p>In April 2012, discussions took place at Delivery Board on preparing a two year (and beyond) delivery plan. In July 2012, Cabinet authorised the development of objectives for a year two plan. However, this has not been produced and there is currently nothing in place to guide the Delivery Board.</p> <p>It is clear that all Partners are in agreement that Community Budgets will provide a clear focus. However at the Leadership Board meeting, the Head of Strategy and Research was asked to research the impact on the Partners of the introduction of community budgets and report back at the next meeting in June 2013. Given these timescales and lack of any concrete plan for the introduction of Community Budgets, it is unlikely that anything specific will be delivered in 2013/14.</p> <p>A contributory factor towards the lack of emphasis on delivery could be due to the Delivery Board not meeting regularly. It was expected to meet monthly, but did not meet between August 2012 and February 2013.</p>	<p>A 2013/14 delivery plan should be prepared by the Leadership Board in conjunction with the Delivery Board. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • realistic and, identifiable projects • expected benefits • clear linkage to the One Swindon priorities and outcomes • timescales <p>New agreed business cases should be added as they are approved by the Leadership Board.</p> <p>The Delivery Board should meet monthly, as defined in its terms of reference.</p> <p>The reasons for the lack of meeting in 2012/13 should be identified and addressed to ensure future meetings are not cancelled.</p> <p>Priority: High</p>	<p>Head of Strategy and Research</p> <p>October/ November 2013</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>A One Swindon Delivery Plan will not be completed. However, there will be a plan with measures and milestones in place so that we can measure the impact of community budgets on One Swindon outcomes.</p>

Ref.	Finding	Recommendations Priority (High/Medium/Low)	Responsible Officer and Timescale	Management Response
1	Risk: Corporate Governance			
1.5	<p>Performance management</p> <p>There is an absence of performance management over delivery within the One Swindon Partnership. The Partnership needs to improve its planning, measuring and overall approach to performance management.</p> <p>The Leadership Board terms of reference do not require the Delivery Board to formally report on performance against the delivery plan/initiatives. The terms of references state that the Leadership Board “<i>maintains and develops relationships with the Delivery Board</i>”. This does not reflect a hierarchical governance relationship.</p> <p>The Delivery Board terms of reference requires them to report by exception, although there is no definition of exception. From a review of minutes there was no evidence of performance reporting as a standard agenda item on the Leadership Board or Delivery Board agenda.</p> <p>As stated in AP 1.1 above, the One Swindon Partnership lacks a standard, agreed approach to Project Management which is necessary to support delivery of the One Swindon projects.</p>	<p>A consistent performance management process, including integrated project management reporting should be established.</p> <p>Priority: High</p>	<p>Head of Strategy and Research</p> <p>December 2013</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>There will be a performance framework linked to the community budget projects which will be agreed by the Board at the end of 2013</p>

Ref.	Finding	Recommendations Priority (High/Medium/Low)	Responsible Officer and Timescale	Management Response
1	<i>Risk: Corporate Governance</i>			
1.6	<p>One Swindon Risk Management</p> <p>There is no up to date risk register in place for the One Swindon Partnership. Also, from the review of the minutes of both the Leadership and Delivery Boards there was no evidence of conversations on the management of One Swindon risks.</p> <p>Risk management is not included in the terms of reference for both Boards.</p>	<p>A risk register for the One Swindon Partnership should be developed, including mitigating actions for all risks identified. This register should be reviewed at least quarterly by the Leadership Board to ensure the Partnership risks are managed or action taken promptly if needed to address any risk causing concern. The Boards' terms of reference should be updated to include risk management responsibilities.</p> <p>Priority: High</p>	<p>Head of Strategy and Research</p> <p>October – November 2013</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>There will be an updated risk register in place for the community budget projects which will also cover the One Swindon outcomes.</p>

Ref.	Finding	Recommendations Priority (High/Medium/Low)	Responsible Officer and Timescale	Management Response
1	<i>Risk: Corporate Governance</i>			
1.7	<p>One Swindon Conference The role of the Swindon Conference within the One Swindon governance structure is not fully understood. Those interviewed stated that it was very valuable forum but did not see it as part of the governance structure, rather as an information sharing opportunity.</p> <p>The governance structure for One Swindon shows the Conference as part of the third pillar, under People and Places. The People and Places role includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • holding the Partnership to account • helping drive the agenda • reach and galvanise community resource • conversations to highlight new ways of working <p>There is no evidence available to demonstrate that these actions are occurring. Concerns were raised during the audit over One Swindon's lack of engagement with the Voluntary and Third Sector and this disconnect in the governance arrangements could be a reason why this relationship is not developing as anticipated.</p>	<p>The role of the People and Places pillar in the One Swindon Governance structure should be reviewed and clarified.</p> <p>This should include defining the role of the bi-annual One Swindon Conference.</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p>	<p>Head of Strategy and Research</p> <p>December 2013</p>	<p>Agreed The next conference will be in February 2014 and we will, before then, attempt to clarify the governance structure</p>
1.8	<p>Overview and Monitoring Group The current One Swindon governance arrangements include an Overview and Monitoring Group. This Group had played a role under the previous Swindon Strategic Partnership and Local Area Agreement arrangements. It has limited relevance to the current governance arrangements. Indeed, almost everyone interviewed during the audit had no, or little, awareness of the group and of what its role is.</p>	<p>The continued involvement of the Overview and Monitoring Group in the One Swindon Partnership should be re-evaluated to decide if it still has a part to play in the future governance arrangements of One Swindon.</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p>	<p>Head of Strategy and Research</p> <p>October 2013</p>	<p>Agreed We are undertaking a review of this group in light of the Chair's resignation and the fact that Board members find it low impact – high resource at the moment. A report will go to the Board meeting in October 2013</p>

Ref.	Finding	Recommendations Priority (High/Medium/Low)	Responsible Officer and Timescale	Management Response
1	<i>Risk: Corporate Governance</i>			
1.9	Performance of Boards The Leadership and Delivery Boards of One Swindon do not regularly review their performance against their terms of reference. Such reviews will ensure the governance structure remains fit for purpose.	At least annually, the Leadership and Delivery Boards of One Swindon should review their performance against their terms of reference. Following such a review any necessary changes should be made to the terms of reference to reflect the operation of the Board concerned. Priority: Medium	Head of Strategy and Research Annually	Agreed We are currently working on joint working agreements with partners in light of community budgets – this will form part of our new terms of reference
1.10	Membership of the Leadership Board The current membership of the Board is large; potentially twenty five or more people could attend a meeting with two or more people representing many organisations. Similar Boards reviewed as part of the audit had fewer people on them. This may make idea generation and acceptance of new ideas difficult as members from different organisations may not be sure who has the remit to speak/accept and take forward new ideas and options. Some current attendees are not included on the list of members recorded in the terms of reference.	The number of people entitled to sit on the One Swindon Leadership Board should be reviewed to establish whether the number is appropriate and workable. Priority: Medium	Head of Strategy and Research Annually (April 2014)	Agreed The membership of the Board at the moment covers all of the main public sector agencies as well as elected members and a representative for the Voluntary and Community Sector. When we review governance in April, we will review the membership

Ref.	Finding	Recommendations Priority (High/Medium/Low)	Responsible Officer and Timescale	Management Response
1	Risk: Corporate Governance			
1.11	<p>Board Meetings</p> <p>The following points were noted from reviewing the minutes of the Delivery/Leadership meetings and through observation of the Leadership Board meeting of the 19th March 2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No obvious follow up of actions from previous meetings. • Minutes reflected lots of discussion but few actions. • At the meeting of the 19th March it was not obvious what decisions had been reached regarding the business cases, nor what timescales were involved. • The Leadership Board was unsure how to progress requests for funding to help get its business case prepared. • A funding request was eventually resolved by suggesting unused Performance Reward Grant monies could be used, although no-one knew how much was available or whether this would cover the request. • No minutes for the Leadership Board meeting had been produced some four weeks later. • The Chief Officer, Clinical Commissioning Group, put forward the proposal that he gets an independent peer review on his business case. He is contacting UWE to get help. Also, it was noted that the proposal put forward by the Probation Service might have possible linkage and synergies with the Council's Strengthening Families programme, this was not commented on. The Police said they operated a similar scheme for persistent re-offenders, there did not appear to be an attempt to see if any linkage could be made or best practice shared. 	<p>Leadership and Delivery Board minutes should be produced promptly.</p> <p>Meetings should formally review previous minutes and action points to ensure they have been implemented.</p> <p>It should be obvious at the meeting concerning what decisions and actions have been agreed, along with associated timescales and people responsible.</p> <p>A reconciliation of the remaining Performance Reward Grant monies should be undertaken and the available figure be available for future Leadership Boards to enable decisions to be made with the knowledge of how much is available and how much would be left.</p> <p>Priority: High</p>	<p>Head of Strategy and Research</p> <p>June 2013</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>The minutes of the Board take more than a month to be completed by the committee section – however, there are always, within three days, a set of notes and actions which are prepared by the partnership team and go to all Board members.</p> <p>There is only £900 left and there will be an update on the projects which have been supported and how much is left.</p> <p>(July 2013 completed – minutes and actions are now reviewed at each meeting going forward, PRG report has been to the Board. Since the meeting took place the Wiltshire Probation Trust have had several conversations with Rob Pollock from the Treasury and are meeting with colleagues from Tri-Boroughs to look at synergies as well as connecting with the strengthening families team around offenders and their families).</p>

Ref.	Finding	Recommendations Priority (High/Medium/Low)	Responsible Officer and Timescale	Management Response
1	<i>Risk: Corporate Governance</i>			
1.12	<p>Awareness</p> <p>Officers interviewed felt there was a disconnect between One Swindon and their day to day work.</p> <p>During the course of the audit, senior officers interviewed accepted that it was unlikely that staff would have much understanding of the One Swindon Partnership and its priorities. Many felt that it was not necessary for staff to have that understanding of One Swindon as much of its focus is at a strategic level.</p> <p>There is a risk that if staff do not see how the One Swindon principles could affect their approach to delivering their daily tasks then opportunities could be lost to generate improved outcomes through partnership working.</p> <p>A good example of establishing a linkage was seen in a recent internal audit covering the delivery of transport projects. All schemes had to have a business case for review and challenge and this included reference to various strategies and priorities, including One Swindon.</p>	<p>The purpose and progress of the One Swindon Partnership should be communicated to all staff, with managers being encouraged to explain how their departmental business plan links up through to the One Swindon priorities and outcomes.</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p>	<p>Head of Strategy and Research</p> <p>completed in June 2013</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>A front-line multi agency event was held in Sept 12 for staff across the partnership to look at how OS links to their everyday work.</p> <p>Departmental business plans should all link to the corporate priorities which in turn link to One Swindon</p> <p>We also held a series of staff lunch & learn sessions last year around One Swindon.</p> <p>We have a One Swindon newsletter which goes monthly to around 1100 people which includes staff, residents, community groups, partners etc.</p>

Ref.	Finding	Recommendations Priority (High/Medium/Low)	Responsible Officer and Timescale	Management Response
1	<i>Risk: Corporate Governance</i>			
1.13	<p>Profile of the One Swindon Partnership</p> <p>None of the partners websites visited had reference or links to the One Swindon website. This could suggest to a resident that One Swindon is not a priority</p> <p>The One Swindon website looks tired and is not a vibrant site for people looking for information on One Swindon and its effectiveness. Some information has not been updated e.g. meeting minutes. The website gives the impression little has happened or is happening with the Partnership.</p>	<p>All partners should have links from their websites to the One Swindon website.</p> <p>The One Swindon website should be refreshed to provide all agendas and minutes of the Leadership and Delivery Board meetings including adding appropriate papers submitted to those meetings. Separate tabs could be set up for each Board and the Swindon Conference to improve navigation around the site.</p> <p>Priority: Low</p>	<p>Head of Strategy and Research</p> <p>Oct 2013</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>The website will be moved onto SharePoint later this year and refreshed</p> <p>The Leadership and Delivery Board meetings are not public so we précis the Leadership Board notes and put them on the site.</p>

Standard Audit Opinions

The audit opinion is based on two different criteria the first is the materiality of the system and its impact on the Council if there was a system failure. This has been spilt into High, Medium or Low.

The second criteria, is the standard of control found within the system audited. This has been categorised into 4 different levels i.e. high; satisfactory; significant improvements required and, fundamental weakness. Each of these categories has a standard opinion (see below).

The combination of these two factors gives an overall risk assessment to the Council of one of four scores i.e. significant, of concern, moderate or minimal (see Overall Opinion section in the main report).

Standard Audit Opinions on System Control
<p>Audit Opinion 1. <i>High standard</i></p> <p>The auditor completing the review concluded the significant system controls are in place and operating effectively and only minor recommendations have been made.</p>
<p>Audit Opinion 2. <i>Satisfactory standard</i></p> <p>The auditor completing the review concluded that most of the significant controls are in place and operating satisfactorily although some non-compliance was identified and therefore there is scope for improvement.</p>
<p>Audit Opinion 3. <i>Significant improvements required</i></p> <p>The auditor completing the review concluded that existing procedures needed to be improved to ensure that they are fully reliable. A number of significant recommendations have been made to improve missing or failing controls.</p>
<p>Audit Opinion 4. <i>Fundamental weaknesses identified</i></p> <p>The auditor completing the review concluded that the matters arising from the review are sufficiently significant to place doubt on the reliability of the procedures reviewed. Implementation of the recommendations made is a priority to ensure that reliance can be placed on the system.</p>

Acknowledgements

Internal Audit would like to acknowledge and thank the following Members, Partners and Council Officers for their contribution to this review

Name	Title/Organisation
Councillor Roderick Bluh	Former Leader of the Council (SBC)
Councillor Jim Grant	Leader of the Labour Group
Gavin Jones	SBC Chief Executive
John Gilbert	SBC Board Director Commissioning
Tony Ranzetta	Clinical Commissioning Group Chief Officer
John Popowicz	Head of Community Safety and Partnerships Wiltshire Fire and Rescue
Keith Ewart	Chief Inspector Wiltshire Police
Cherry Jones	Deputy Director of Public Health Primary Care Trust (now SBC)
Sue Wald	SBC Head of Commissioning – Children and Adults
Paddy Bradley	SBC Head of Commissioning – Economy and Attainment
Gwillam Lloyd	SBC Head of Highways and Transport
Ian Bickerton	SBC Service Delivery Head of Leisure, Libraries, Culture and Traded Services
James Griffin	SBC Head of Strategy and Research
Alison Chamberlain	Partnership Development Officer

December 2012

STAFFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Outcome 1: Staffordshire will have a thriving economy

Outcome lead – Ron Dougan, Chair, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Headline Points

Developing a more business-friendly environment

- We have been selected to submit an Expression of Interest for a Wave Two City Deal which will accelerate growth in the local economy. This includes work on sites, connectivity, energy, skills, and research and development.
- Following the success of the pilot, the business support helpline has been tendered and a provider secured for the next two years. This will continue to provide a single point of contact for support and advice.
- Six projects identified for Growing Places Fund support that will deliver between 3,900 and 7,200 jobs with further submissions being reviewed.
- A further four bids were successful in the third round of Regional Growth Fund.
- Work is on site at i54 site, and remaining plots are being marketed. Construction has commenced on the JLR plant.

Branding and marketing Staffordshire as an aspirational place to live, work, visit and invest regionally, nationally and internationally

- Through the DMP, delivering a marketing strategy to influence key audiences to achieve the above objective, develop the sector's performance and product offer, and encourage repeat visits and boost spend.
- The aligned inward investment service is now in place.
- Funding has been earmarked to support a range of targeted promotional initiatives

Raising aspirations and improve the attainment of skills linked to employment opportunities

- Continue to work with the LEP, the recently established Education Trust and with training providers to provide a full range of diverse learning programmes to meet demand including Apprenticeship growth.
- Stimulate demand for new Apprenticeship opportunities by working with partners and providers to encourage the use of Apprenticeships for quality workforce development and recruitment.
- Establish effective mechanisms to track young people currently not in education, employment or training (NEET), or not known, or in danger of dropping out of learning. Have data sharing protocols in place with all providers to enable effective and timely intervention to get young people back into learning or employment.

An Example of a Strategic Partnership Delivery Plan and Update

STAFFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Delivering our Higher Level Outcomes and Priorities

Higher Level Outcome:	Outcome 1: Staffordshire will have a thriving economy
Priority:	Develop a more business-friendly environment
What are we setting out to do (what will success look like)?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create 50,000 new jobs and a 50% increase in the size of the economy over ten years by<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Supporting Existing Businesses to Grow◦ Increasing Inward Investment◦ Successfully Marketing Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire as a place to do business◦ Improving Access to Finance and Funding◦ Providing the Right Sites & Infrastructure◦ Ensuring the Skills & Training of our Workforce Meet Business Needs	
What are the key actions we are taking to deliver this priority?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working with partners to develop a strong submission for a wave two city deal that will accelerate local economic growth. This includes work on sites, connectivity, energy, skills, and research and development.• Delivering the LEP's Strategic Business Plan including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Championing and promoting a "Red Carpet" for business development and inward investment◦ Following the success of the pilot the business support helpline has been tendered and a provider secured for the next two years. This will continue to provide a single point of contact for support and advice.◦ Working with planning authorities to develop approaches that respond efficiently to economic proposals◦ The joint Inward Investment team is now promoting our area and targeting potential investors through a range of activities. The success of these are regularly monitored.◦ Developing a new equity fund with Central England Business Angels and signposting other resources.◦ Supporting 10 successful RGF bids in rounds 1,2, and 3. Four successful in round three.◦ Supporting six projects with Growing Places Fund and reviewing a second round of submissions.• Delivering the extended Staffordshire Business Support Fund to provide a further £2m of loans to existing SMEs and start-ups including a contribution to cover Stoke on Trent.• Following the receipt of outline planning permission we are continuing to progress the development of Redhill Employment Park.• Delivering the infrastructure at the i54 site, and marketing remaining plots. Completing the procurement phase of the project to improve broadband infrastructure across the county. Works expected to commence spring 2013• Supporting the DMP in the delivery of the ERDF- funded project, Developing the Staffordshire Visitor Economy, over the period 2013-15, which includes support for SME efficiency and marketing development.	

An Example of a Strategic Partnership Delivery Plan and Update

<p>Who are the key partners we are working with?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. ▪ City of Stoke-on-Trent Council. ▪ District and Borough Councils. ▪ UK Trade & Investment. ▪ Chambers of Commerce (e.g. NSCC) & Federation of Small Businesses. ▪ Financial organisations, including BCRS. ▪ Broadband Delivery UK (DCMS). ▪ Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership (DMP)
<p>So what difference is it making or will it make in the future?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We are promoting our needs directly to government. Examples include meetings with Ministers and MPs and requests for local input. ▪ The inward investment service will result in a more cohesive approach to managing inward investment opportunities. As such there is an expectation that the levels of investment will increase or at least maintain the current high standards. ▪ The single point of contact for businesses has and will continue to streamline provision of support and signposting by building on the experience of the pilot. ▪ The Growing Places Fund will unlock infrastructure blockages with funding being recycled for reinvestment. ▪ The Staffordshire Business Support Fund provides a further opportunity for small businesses and start-ups to access finance unavailable from banks, helping to safeguard existing employment, create new jobs, and support the formation of new businesses across the county. The new contract is in partnership with Stoke on Trent to cover all areas of the local economy. ▪ The Local Broadband Plan, approved by Government, will ensure that the selected supplier invests to upgrade broadband infrastructure to make superfast broadband available to at least 90% of premises by May 2015, and eliminating not-spots and slow-spots from the county. ▪ Through the DMP, £543k of ERDF funding has been secured to develop the Staffordshire leisure and business visitor economy.
<p>Challenges to success?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The macro-economic climate continues to be challenging, and businesses may choose a cautious approach when considering expansion plans. • The districts based in the south of the county are members of both the Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP as well as the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP. As such, they have exposure to two sets of enquiries regarding investment, resulting in a potential conflict of interest. • The Staffordshire visitor economy is fragmented and SMEs attracted by alternative destinations, e.g. Marketing Birmingham, the National Forest, the Peak District and Marketing Cheshire.
<p>Next Steps?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue the development of the initiatives set out above. ▪ Work closely with partners across Staffordshire to deliver the best environment of business and ensure that local businesses are well informed and supported. ▪ Building on links with UK Trade & Investment. ▪ Further development of the work with CEBA. ▪ Promote the designation of our area as a Transition Area in the EU Funding programme for 2014-2020