



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	<b>FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 29 JANUARY 2020</b>
Report Number	<b>Agenda Item No. 9</b>
Subject	<b>DRAFT PUBLICA BUSINESS PLAN 2020-22</b>
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr James Mills      Leader of the Council Tel: (01993) 861000    Email: <a href="mailto:james.mills@westoxon.gov.uk">james.mills@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Giles Hughes          Chief Executive Tel: (01993) 861000    Email: <a href="mailto:Giles.Hughes@westoxon.gov.uk">Giles.Hughes@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	For the committee to receive a presentation on the Draft Publica Business Plan 2020-22 and comment on the plan which will be distributed to the committee on the 27 <sup>th</sup> January.
Annexes	Annex A - Draft Publica Business Plan 2020-22 Annex B - Report to the Publica Board in December 2019 from the Incoming Managing Director
Recommendation/s	<i>a) To note the report and receive a presentation at the meeting from the Publica Executive Director (Finance); and b) To provide feedback on the Draft Publica Business Plan 2020-22 that can be considered by the Publica Board before the plan is presented to the Cabinet for consideration.</i>
Corporate priorities	Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	List any consultees or consultation that has taken place.

## **BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. As part of the establishment of Publica a number of items were identified as reserved matters for council approval to ensure that member councils retained an element of control over their company. The reserved matters were approved in October 2016 as part of the governance principles underpinning the establishment of Publica.
- 1.2. The reserved matters decisions fall to the shareholder representatives to determine. For each partner Council this is the Leader of the Council. To assist the Leader in reaching his decision it has been requested that the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet review the Business Plan and suggest any appropriate amendments.
- 1.3. The Publica Executive Director (Finance), Frank Wilson, along with the new Managing Director, Jan Britton, will attend the meeting and give a presentation to the committee on the Draft Business Plan and answer any questions.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

- 2.1 The focus of the business plan is on supporting the partner councils to deliver their priorities, improve Publica's approach to commissioning, continue to improve services and customer experience using digital technology, deliver efficiency savings, and invest in its employees development. Collectively, the strategic key actions that support the business plan priorities form a cohesive programme achieving sustainable and embedded change over the business plan period.
- 2.2 The Business Plan provides the 'vehicle' to carry forward and address the issues identified in the Incoming Managing Director's report to the Publica Board over the next two years, a copy of the report is at Annex B.
- 2.3 The proposal is for the plan to be for the next two years and to review and refresh it in 2021. This will enable a sustained focus on the priorities and the longer horizon will fit better with the nature of the plan and priorities. It will also enable the partner councils to review the priorities and key strategic actions during the life of the plan. The legal advice we have received is that this is permitted under the Members' Agreement.
- 2.4 The proposed Business Plan priorities are:
  - Support our partner councils to deliver their priorities
  - Get commissioning right
  - Improve customers' experience
  - Become an employer of choice
- 2.5 The draft business plan will be considered by the Publica Board on the 24<sup>th</sup> January before each of the Shareholder Councils' scrutiny committees are consulted. The feedback that is received from each committee will be presented back to the Publica Board on the 6th March. During March-April the plan will then be presented to the Shareholder Councils' Cabinets' for recommendation to their respective Council Leader (as Shareholder) to give formal agreement.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 As part of the Councils Medium Term Financial Strategy savings are included in line with the Publica business case approved in October 2016. Publica is required to deliver these savings and Strategic Action 6 in the business plan outlines a commitment to deliver these.

### **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 This Business Plan has to be adopted in accordance with The Members Agreement for Publica Group Limited.

### **5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1. There are no specific risks in adopting the Publica business plan as it is based upon the principles and targets set out in the business case approved by the Council in 2016.
- 5.2. If the Council does not adopt the plan there is a risk that the company will not be able to commence some of the activities necessary to deliver the savings set out in the business case and Council's MTFS.

### **6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 6.1. The committee is free to make comments in relation to the Draft Plan.

### **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None