**Title:** Preparing for change (summary proposal)

**Date:** 17 June 2021

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**Action required**: Decision

Introduction:

As part of a national review Stoke-On-Trent and Staffordshire LEP (SSLEP) role, function, relationships, finance and geographic area of responsibility is subject to change. The purpose of this paper is to:

* ensure that Board members understand the changing strategic landscape
* seek approval to create a robust foundation that will enable SSLEP and Growth Hub to ably respond to their new mandate and demonstrate continued robust governance

##### provide the capacity and agility to respond to national mandates, whilst maintaining focus on the local economy during this period of change

Proposals are intended to strengthen operational capability given that the primary delivery enabler has already changed (i.e. our ability to commission outcomes through large-scale programmes of investment).

Context:

See appendix 1: Preparing for Change

Decision required:

To approve the action plan set out on page 2 and associated revised budget 2021/22

Proposed Action Plan:

Actions are presented over three phases to enable progression whilst mitigating the risk of future change:

**Phase 1**: immediate actions to stabilise existing team and provide core functions not at risk of change, linked to new functional role. Taking stock to assess future risk of change.

**Phase 2**: staff transition/recruitment of new senior roles to secure a strong foundation for operational team going forward

**Phase 3**: Develop future plans and processes for the future

The Action Plan below should e read in conjunction with:

* Appendix 1: Preparing for Change
* Appendix 2: Governance - operational workflow and roles, which sets out further detail as to how the enhanced operational team would work alongside Board and local partners to deliver strategic ambitions
* The revised Budget 2021/22

Action Plan:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Phase | Action | Timescales | Implications/impact |
| 1 | Assign T&F Group to plan and oversee operational change | June-Oct 21 | Ensures robust governance and efficiency/ability to explore detail |
| Approve budget and reserves investment | 17 June 21 | Enables operational activity to proceed |
| Approve extension of existing contract (Business Engagement Officer) by 3 months during transitional period | Safeguards existing resources  |
| Approve commission for Insight support to provide granular-level insight and support Business support review | Enables us to establish systems to deliver against function 1 and additional resource to support business support review |
| Align Marketing resource (direct operational reporting) | Marketing lead will report direct to CEO operationally |
| Ensure direct leadership and governance of Growth Hub (direct reports operationally and to Board via SPMG) | GH lead will report direct to CEO operationally and ensure that operational performance/budget is overseen by SPMG |
| 2 | Create integrated team | By Sept 21 | Operational consistency and efficiency |
| Commence recruitment to new structure | Provides resources to deliver future function and strategy |
| Work with partners and providers to review Business Support | Enables us to assess risk and ensure fit for purpose going forward |
| Board recruitment | To fill vacancies |
| Explore VAT recovery | To improve financial viability |
| 3 | Create Integrated Plan for Growth | By November 21 | To provide clear direction of travel that fits with national policy |
| Subgroup review (consider Youth Board) | To ensure golden thread from strategy to delivery |
| Create annual Business Plan detailing delivery/KPIs etc | To enable efficient planning of resources |
| Stakeholder Plan | To enable efficient planning and prioritisation of resources |
| Introduce Stakeholder survey/NPS | To embed continuous improvement and understand where we are adding value |
| Reserves Policy | To improve future planning and financial viability |
| Assurance framework review | To ensure good practice and alignment with changes |
| Rebrand | To reposition the LEP and communicate its new role |