

Strategic Development Plan for Edinburgh and South East Scotland (SESplan)

Report by Mary Smith, Director of Education, Communities and Economy

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update elected members and seek ratification of amendments relating to the SESplan Governance arrangements including changes to the SESplan Constitution, Financial Rules, Scheme of Delegation and Standing Orders.

2 Background

- 2.1 At its meeting of 25 June 2018 the SESplan joint Committee considered a report on the outcome of an audit of the SESplan governance arrangements, undertaken by Fife Council in March 2018. The draft minute of this meeting along with the governance report identifying the changes to the constitution, financial rules, scheme of delegation and standing orders are available in the CMIS Members Library. The current governance documents are also available on the SESplan web site - [SESplan - South East Scotland strategic development planning authority](#)
- 2.2 The audit identified five areas where improvements to the constitution, financial rules and governance arrangements could be made namely:
- i. SESplan should formally consider amending its Constitution, and related procedures, to advise complainants that if not satisfied with SESplan's initial response, referral to the Ombudsman (SPSO) is available;
 - ii. SESplan should formally consider amending its Constitution for the Joint Committee to approve the Budget by December for Member Authorities to ratify in the New Year;
 - iii. SESplan should formally consider amending its Financial Rules for it to be the Strategic Development Plan Manager, in consultation with the Treasurer, to submit appropriate financial monitoring reports to the SESplan Joint Committee;
 - iv. Financial support arrangements should be improved to demonstrate reconciliation and agreement of SESplan and Financial Ledger figures, at least biannually, and prompt provision to SESplan of transaction processing details around year end; and
 - v. The SESplan Annual Governance Statement should make specific reference to: best value/value for money; risk; the effectiveness of the controls; plans; monitoring of action being taken.

In addition to the above there are also a number of minor editing and formatting changes proposed to the above governance documents.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

There are no resource issues arising from the changes identified in this report.

3.2 Risk

Implementing the proposed improvements reduces the likelihood of adverse opinion being received in respect of future internal/external audits.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- Community safety
- Adult health, care and housing
- Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- Sustainable growth
- Business transformation and Best Value
- None of the above

3.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Robust and effective governance arrangements assist the preparation of the Strategic Development Plan which, along with the Midlothian Local Development Plan provides a policy and spatial framework to meeting housing demand, drive economic growth and secure environmental sustainability; these also being themes which underpin Single Midlothian Plan.

3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

There will be no impact on performance and outcomes for the Council.

3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Having appropriate and up to date governance arrangements in place provides sufficient transparency and accountability in terms of how SESplan manages the overall decision making, resource allocation and delivery processes involved in preparing the plan.

3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The SESplan constitution, scheme of delegation, financial rules and standing orders are published on the SESplan web site.

3.8 Ensuring Equalities

There are no equality issues arising from the proposed changes.

3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

The proposed changes relate to the administration of the strategic development plan and therefore do not raise any sustainable development issues.

3.10 **IT Issues**

There are no IT issues arising from this report.

4 Recommendations

4.1 It is recommended that Council:

- a. notes the SESplan Joint Committee minutes of 25 June 2018 and matters arising; and
- b. ratifies the proposed changes to the SESplan Constitution, Financial Rules, Scheme of Delegation and Standing Orders as outlined in the report and supporting documents.

Date: 7 August 2018

Report Contact: Peter Arnsdorf, Planning Manager Tel No 0131 271 3310
peter.arnsdorf@midlothian.gov.uk

Background Papers:

The following papers are available in the CMIS Members Library:

- I. SESplan Joint Committee, draft minute of meeting 25 June 2018
- II. SESplan Joint Committee, 25 June 2018 – Item 8 Governance