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## Committee Options Paper

Proposal subject	Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)
Committee chairman	Warren Whyte
Officer contact	Kama Wager, Policy Officer (Overview & Scrutiny) supporting the Environment, Transport and Locality Services select committee; Tel: 01296 382615; <a href="mailto:kwager@buckscc.gov.uk">kwager@buckscc.gov.uk</a>
Background to the item	<p>Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) help determine local economic priorities and lead economic growth and job creation within a local area. The majority of LEPs formed over 2012 following the abolition of Regional Development Agencies. They comprise representatives from businesses and local authorities.</p> <p>The work of LEPs, and their relationship with local authorities and elected members, is an area that has been raised both at recent committee meetings (specifically in relation to transport/infrastructure and the role of LEPs) and at a member conference held in October 2013 (at which the Centre for Public Scrutiny outlined its research on LEPs and local authority scrutiny functions).</p> <p>The committee agreed at its 6<sup>th</sup> December 2013 meeting that it wished to develop its knowledge and understanding around LEPs and requested an information paper from the BCC service area to be considered at the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2013 meeting, providing members with an opportunity to ask questions of the Leader and Lead Officer around the role and structure of local LEPs.</p> <p>At the 4<sup>th</sup> March the committee will have an introduction to LEPs expanding on the information paper, to build their understanding on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The history and role of LEPs</li><li>• The structure, roles and responsibilities in Buckinghamshire</li><li>• Funding and processes (introduction).</li><li>• The Board Membership, executive team, member representation on the boards.</li></ul>

<p>Proposal</p>	<p>This paper outlines options for the committee to consider how to take forward further work on LEPs and agree next steps. Suggested options for the committee could include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the committee agree that members have received sufficient information to understand the role of LEPs locally and that there is no value to be added in carrying out further work at this time.</li> <li>2. That the committee would like to further develop their knowledge and understanding of LEPs and their role in Buckinghamshire by undertaking a short inquiry examining the role of LEPS in more detail.</li> </ol> <p>If option two is supported, then suggested lines of inquiry could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To understand the national context of LEPs including comparisons with other county bases,</li> <li>• To understand roles, responsibilities, achievements and priority setting of local LEPs - (brief outline of set-up arrangements and how they operate).</li> <li>• The opportunities and challenges of overlaps between LEP boundaries/areas.</li> <li>• To understand and examine the ongoing governance of LEPs, and democratic accountability on behalf of local residents.</li> <li>• To understand the challenges; business vs local authority focus, business vs economic development, governance and accountability, capacity, delegation/devolution</li> <li>• To understand the cooperative working between LEPs and local authorities and how this is working in practice in Buckinghamshire</li> <li>• Communication and opportunities for local authorities and elected members to contribute, input and influence LEP work.</li> <li>• To understand the various types of funding that LEPs have available to them and the processes involved.</li> <li>• To understand the funding relationships between local authorities and LEPs and how this relationship could develop.</li> </ul> <p>NB: If supported, an outline timetable for option 2 could be as follows: Full scope to be agreed at 8<sup>th</sup> April 2014 committee meeting with nomination of members for a 1-2 day evidence gathering workshop with key witnesses providing evidence to the committee in April/May with reporting scheduled for June/July 2014.</p>
<p>Potential outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To inform committee members about the role of LEPs, to improve their knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• As an organisation, to ask questions around the benefits and challenges presented by overlaps between two LEPs.</li> <li>• To foster cooperative working and influence between the council elected members, and LEPs.</li> </ul>