



To: The Leader and Executive Councillor for Strategy and Transformation: Councillor Lewis Herbert

Report by: Andrew Limb, Head of Corporate Strategy

Relevant scrutiny committee: Strategy & Resources
20/10/2014
Scrutiny Committee

Wards affected: Abbey Arbury Castle Cherry Hinton Coleridge East Chesterton King's Hedges Market Newnham Petersfield Queen Edith's Romsey Trumpington West Chesterton

ESTABLISHMENT OF GREATER CAMBRIDGE JOINT GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Key Decision

1. Executive summary

1.1 The Greater Cambridge City Deal document was signed on 19 June 2014 on behalf of all five local partners (Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership and the University of Cambridge) and Government.

1.2 The Deal is underpinned by a commitment to deliver transformative economic benefits through investment in infrastructure and through a collaborative governance framework, featuring an Executive Board that brings together the partner organisations and a wider Assembly. An effective and efficient governance structure is recognised in the deal document as key to the delivery of the infrastructure programme and to planning effectively for future growth.

1.3 It is envisaged that the governance framework will consist of a five person Executive Board, supported by a 15 person Assembly that comprises a mix of elected Members and wider stakeholders. The Assembly is envisaged to perform an advisory function in support of the work of the Executive Board, which is expected to be the decision-making body for those issues within the remit of the governance framework.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended to agree the following and to recommend them to Full Council for endorsement:

a) The Terms of Reference for the Executive Board;

b) The Leader of the Council be appointed to represent the Council on the Executive Board;

c) Councillor Blencowe be appointed as the Council's substitute representative on the Executive Board;

d) The Terms of Reference for the Assembly;

and e) The delegation of the executive functions of the City Council referred to in the Terms of Reference for the Executive Board.

2.2 The Executive Councillor is recommended to invite Full Council to:

e) Appoint Council's three representatives on the Assembly, on a politically proportionate basis.

3. Background

3.1 The Greater Cambridge City Deal document was signed on 19 June 2014 on behalf of all five local partners (Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership and the University of Cambridge) and Government.

3.2 Partners have expressed a preference for the creation of a Greater Cambridge Combined Authority. However, legislation governing Combined Authorities will need to be amended if such a body is to be created for the Greater Cambridge area. An initial consultation was undertaken on potential changes to this legislation by Government earlier this year, to which the partners submitted a combined response. It is unclear at this point when changes to legislation can be expected to be proposed by Government.

3.3 In the interim period before a Combined Authority can be established, the partners have committed to set up a Joint Committee to drive greater coordination and closer working.

3.4 The Leader is recommended to agree to the establishment of the Greater Cambridge Executive Board as a joint committee. Similar

processes are currently being followed in South Cambridgeshire DC and Cambridgeshire County Council.

Executive Board

3.5 As stated above, the Executive Board is expected to be the key decision-making body within the governance framework. Proposed Terms of Reference for the Executive Board are attached in Appendix A. These include delegation of exercise of member councils' functions to the Executive Board to the extent necessary for the Board to exercise its powers.

3.6 The Executive Board is expected to consist of one representative from each of the five partner organisations, with each organisation determining its own representative. It is proposed that the Leader of the Council be appointed to represent the Council on the Executive Board.

3.7 Each partner organisation will also need to appoint a named substitute representative who may act in all respects as a voting member of the Executive Board in the absence of the voting member appointed. It is proposed that Councillor Blencowe be appointed as the Council's substitute representative on the Executive Board.

3.8 Due to restrictions in legislation governing Local Authority Joint Committees, it is anticipated that the three Local Authority representatives on the Executive Board would hold voting powers, whilst the representatives of the University of Cambridge and Local Enterprise Partnership (who would be co-opted) would act as non-voting members. The Local Authority representatives would commit through the Terms of Reference to act with due regard to the opinions of those representatives.

3.9 Where possible, it is expected that the Executive Board would operate on the basis of consensus to ensure that decisions taken have the backing of Members across the city-region. It is recognised that this may not always be possible, and this is addressed in the Terms of Reference.

Assembly

3.10 It is anticipated that the Assembly will play an advisory role, acting as a forum for discussion with a wider range of Members and stakeholders across the Greater Cambridge area, so that the Board benefits from a wider range of input and expertise in making its decisions. The Assembly will usually meet in advance of Executive Board meetings to pre-scrutinise the issues the Board will be taking decisions on and advise the Board accordingly.

3.11 The most appropriate structure for the Assembly to be constituted in order to fulfil its advisory role is a forum (a joint advisory committee) convened by the Executive Board, which allows it to be used in a flexible way in supporting the Executive Board's decision-making.

3.12 Proposed Terms of Reference for the Assembly are included in Appendix B.

3.13 It is proposed that the Assembly consist of 15 representatives, with three nominated by each partner organisation. The representatives nominated by each Council will need to be drawn from within that organisation, representing the political composition of the District councils in the case of South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City Council, and the county council divisions in the Greater Cambridge area in relation to the County Council. However, that requirement does not exist for the representatives of the University of Cambridge and Local Enterprise Partnership.

3.14 The Leader is recommended to invite Full Council appoint the Council's three representatives on the Assembly in accordance with the proportionality principle set out in para 2.93.13 above, and usual principles for nominations from Groups.

Strategic spatial/transport planning

3.15 Throughout the Deal process, there has been a shared desire amongst the partner organisations to integrate more closely the Councils' powers and responsibilities relating to strategic spatial and transport planning. Through the Deal Document we have committed to formalise the existing good joint working arrangements as part of the move towards a Combined Authority structure. It should be noted that the emerging Local Plans for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire are still to go through public examination and be adopted.

3.16 The most effective means by which this integration could be achieved would be to merge the statutory Local Plan-making responsibilities of Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council with the County Council's transport strategy powers relating to the city-region to form a single Growth Plan when the Local Plans are next reviewed – and we have committed to begin an early review in 2019 to take into account the changed circumstances arising from substantial City Deal investment.

3.17 As it stands the only means by which this could be done would be through the formation of a Section 29 Committee, which would require a parliamentary process to establish and revoke. However, there is unlikely to be a workload for such a body at this point in time given the fact that the

Local Plan review would not be started until 2019. The requirement to form a Section 29 Committee is currently expected to be superseded by the creation of a Combined Authority. No action to create a section 29 committee and delegate planning powers to it is therefore proposed at this time, but in coming years it may prove necessary to propose such action, to ensure that those powers are joined up and delegated for joint decision making through the City Deal governance arrangements ahead of the Local Plan review due to start in 2019.

3.18 Through the examination of the strategic planning and transport commitment, it has become clear that moving towards a more fully integrated, shared planning and transport service could offer many potential advantages to the three councils and their stakeholders in delivering City Deal and sustainable growth more broadly across the Greater Cambridge area. The alignment of strategic planning and transport strategy preparation with the growth delivery activities that the councils are engaged upon will ensure the achievement of City Deal outcomes is optimised. The exploration of ways in which an integrated shared service approach can be achieved will be undertaken by the councils over the next 12 months, and brought back to committee for decision at the appropriate time.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications from the decisions in this report, other than the Council's interest in the City Deal funding received from Government (which is delegated to the Joint Committee). Other funding may be delegated to the Joint Committee in due course. Officer support for the new committee will be provided by the three councils from existing resources.

(b) Staffing Implications (if not covered in Consultations Section)

None – officers will support the new committee as per current objectives.

(c) Equal Opportunities Implications

An equality impact assessment has not been carried out. Officers are of the view that there are no direct equalities implications from the creation of this committee. Decisions that the committee takes will be informed by equality impact assessments where appropriate.

(d) Environmental Implications

There are no significant environmental implications from this decision.

(e) Procurement

No procurement connected directly to this decision.

(f) Consultation and communication

The intention to create a new joint governance framework as part of the city deal has been communicated publicly through press releases previously, and the creation of this committee will be communicated through the Council's normal channels.

(g) Community Safety

No direct implications.

5. Background papers

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/city-deals-greater-cambridge>

6. Appendices

Appendix A: Executive Board Terms of Reference & Standing Orders.

Appendix B: Assembly Terms of Reference & Standing Orders

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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