

Subject:	Combined Authority for Lancashire update	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny	Date:	1 st February 2016
Report of:	Chief Executive	Portfolio Holder:	Leader of the Council
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required:	No	Attached: No
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1.	RECOMMENDATION(S)
1.1	The content of the report to be noted.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To outline the Combined Authority devolution deal proposals.
- 2.2 To raise awareness of the Consultation process.
- 2.3 To outline the amendments included in the amended Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill ('the Bill'), and consider what they mean for Rossendale and Lancashire.
- 2.4 This report compliments the Combined Authority for Lancashire which was reported to members in December 2015 and seeks to outline changes that have been made since the report was published.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:
 - **Regenerating Rossendale:** This priority focuses on regeneration in its broadest sense, so it means supporting communities that get on well together, attracting sustainable investment, promoting Rossendale, as well as working as an enabler to promote the physical regeneration of Rossendale.
 - **Responsive Value for Money Services:** This priority is about the Council working collaboratively, being a provider, procurer and a commissioner of services that are efficient and that meet the needs of local people.
 - **Clean Green Rossendale:** This priority focuses on clean streets and town centres and well managed open spaces, whilst recognising that the Council has to work with communities and as a partner to deliver this ambition.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

The Governance review in the background papers sets out options available but there are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report at this stage.

5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 5.1 The 5 strands of the devolution deal currently being discussed within Lancashire are:
 - Skilled Lancashire**
 - Proposed areas of focus are to close the gap in the performance of local employability

programmes; and increase the take up of apprenticeships in priority sector areas.

Better Homes

Areas of focus are to develop a new homes target for Lancashire based on opportunity and need; and an agreed improved homes target linked to infrastructure delivery.

Connected Lancashire

Delivery of a strategic transport scheme with the potential to create income and jobs which is closely linked to developments relating to the Northern Powerhouse.

Prosperous Lancashire

Delivery of high value economic initiatives with the potential to create income and safeguard jobs.

Public Service Reform

Proposals focus on more economical organisation of local health and social care services to close funding gaps; and to establish new public service delivery models.

See Appendix 1 for more information.

- 5.2 The Lancashire Combined Authority provides an opportunity for Rossendale Borough Council to extend its influence on matters that are of importance to its residents. Examples include Transport, which is currently a County Council responsibility and how funds allocated to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) are distributed.

Given Lancashire’s diversity, it is acknowledged that local, bespoke approaches will be required for some areas. Collaboration with the Lancashire Combined Authority will not prevent West Lancashire Borough Council becoming an associate member of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority or Rossendale Borough Council seeking to become an associate member of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority in the future.

- 5.3 Five combined authorities have been established so far. Examples of all powers and funding that have been devolved to individual areas can be found on the Devolution Register (<http://www.local.gov.uk/devolution/register>) :
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority
 - Sheffield City Region
 - Liverpool City Region
 - North East Combined Authority
 - West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Lancashire’s geography locates it at the heart of this and the Government has been clear that it will devolve powers and flexibilities to areas with robust governance structures in place.

- 5.4 The option of an elected mayor for the Combined Authority will be available following Royal Assent of the Bill, although this is not necessary for the creation of the Combined Authority.
- 5.5 A public consultation began on the 11th January across all of Lancashire (with the exception of Wyre Borough Council) to run until 19th February. Link <http://www.infusion.org.uk/lancsca/>. The consultation asks residents, Businesses, Councillors and council employees to contribute via the online survey.
- 5.6 The Bill is currently progressing through Parliament. Aspects related to the construction of a Combined Authority were outlined in the Combined Authority for Lancashire report.
- 5.7 The Bill also provides for a number of other flexibilities, including:
- Enabling (but not requiring) a Combined Authority to have a directly-elected Mayor.

- Providing for the Mayor of a Combined Authority to exercise the functions of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for the area (and where that occurs, allow the current PCC term of office to be extended until the mayor is in place.)
- Enabling the Secretary of State to remove a council from the boundaries of a combined authority, if it is the only one that does not consent to establishing an elected Mayor.
- Allowing a mayoral combined authority to levy council tax as a major precepting authority, similar to county councils or the Greater London Authority.
- Establishing a scrutiny function for combined authorities as well as an overview and scrutiny function to cover the mayoral office.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

6. SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 6.1 Previous reports to Members have noted that any financial costs will be kept to a minimum. Any financial implications arising will therefore be contained within existing budget resources.
- 6.2 It is worth noting that an aspect of becoming a Combined Authority is that EU borrowing will be encouraged (as the structure of Combined Authorities harmonise with EU Governance). This means, therefore, that the proposed EU In Out Referendum may take on greater significance.

7. MONITORING OFFICER

- 7.1 The legal implications are outlined in the Combined Authority for Lancashire report.

8. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 8.1 Briefings and updates have been provided to members to support them in their decision making around the Council's involvement relating to a Combined Authority.
- 8.2 An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken within the consultation period.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 There is a Central Government drive towards the creation of Combined Authorities and this appears to be the preferred method for central government to liaise with local government.
- 9.2 The Consultation is now active and should be promoted far and wide. Anyone in Lancashire can contribute. Link <http://www.infusion.org.uk/lancsca/>.

Background papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Lancashire Combined Authority Report- December 2015	http://www.rossendale.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/8169/e2_combined_authority
Cities and Government Devolution Bill- Commons Amendments	(http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/lbill/2015-2016/0080/15080.pdf)
Lancashire Combined Authority Devolution Deal- draft outline proposals	Appendix 1
Combined Authority Consultation	http://www.infusion.org.uk/lancsca/