

CABINET

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| DATE | 09/12/2020 |
| REPORT OF | Councillor Philip Jackson, Leader of the Council |
| RESPONSIBLE OFFICER | Rob Walsh Chief Executive |
| SUBJECT | Greater Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Oversight Committee |
| STATUS | Open |
| FORWARD PLAN REF NO. | GENERAL EXCEPTION - Not included on the Forward Plan therefore, to be considered under the General Exception provisions of the Constitution |

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The Council has long realised the benefits of collaborative and partnership working across all sectors, both public and private to realise achievement of its stated aims of Stronger Economy, Stronger Communities. There are opportunities to strengthen partnership working across the unitary authorities of Greater Lincolnshire. The recommendations within this report helps to further the interests of the residents and businesses of Greater Lincolnshire, exploring opportunities to work strategically together and realising any potential to enable funding to be better utilised, service quality to be improved and greater outcomes to be delivered. The recommendations build on existing relationships and seeks to place a greater degree of structure, formality and visibility around them.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks approval to form a joint committee with Lincolnshire County Council and North Lincolnshire Council. The committee will be tasked with looking at opportunities to work together on strategic matters across Greater Lincolnshire.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Supports and authorises the creation of a joint committee, the Greater Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Oversight Committee, to explore strategic issues and alignment of opportunities across Greater Lincolnshire.
2. Authorises the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, and with the support of the Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer, to settle terms of reference and governance arrangements around the proposed committee.
3. Refers the matter to the next meeting of Full Council for approval.

REASONS FOR DECISION

The Council has long realised the benefits of collaborative and partnership working across all sectors, both public and private. There are opportunities to strengthen partnership working across the unitary authorities of Greater Lincolnshire. The recommendations within this report help to further the interests of the residents and businesses of Greater Lincolnshire, exploring opportunities to work strategically together and realising any potential to enable funding to be better utilised, service quality to be improved and greater outcomes to be delivered. The recommendations build on existing relationships and seek to place a greater degree of structure, formality and visibility around them.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 1.1 It is hoped that building on existing relationships and partnerships will provide a firm foundation to potentially broaden the opportunities to deliver economic growth, improve connectivity and transport systems, level-up our economy to provide skills, accelerate the delivery of new homes and sustainable communities. Working closely with Greater Lincolnshire partners will enable the delivery of growth and prosperity for Greater Lincolnshire by ensuring the strategic alignment of any opportunities are fully explored and considered.
- 1.2 The Council has already been working with North Lincolnshire Council and Lincolnshire County Council in exploring the benefits of local government reorganisation. Whilst it is positive that the government will consider proposals for the region in due course, there are opportunities now to improve the way that services are delivered to those that we represent.
- 1.3 Subject to the approval of each of the three constituent local authorities, it is proposed to establish a Joint Strategic Oversight Committee for Greater Lincolnshire. There are specific rules governing who has the authority to appoint a joint committee depending on what type of functions (executive or non-executive or both) are being exercised by the proposed joint committee. In short the position is:-
 - If the joint committee is exercising purely non-executive functions, then only the Council can appoint it
 - If the joint committee is exercising purely executive functions, then the Leader (or the Executive/Cabinet) is authorised by Regulations to appoint it
 - If one or more but not all of functions of the joint committee are executive functions, then the Council must appoint it but only with the agreement of the Executive/Cabinet.
- 1.4 The joint committee proposed in the document at Appendix A is considered to be exercising purely executive functions and therefore the appointment falls to the Leader or the Executive/Cabinet of the Council. Subject to the support and agreement of Cabinet it is proposed that the matter is then referred to Full Council for ratification.

- 1.5 The formation of the committee would enable the three authorities to work collaboratively. The committee will seek to identify and develop opportunities for closer working on both strategy and policy.
- 1.6 The first iteration of the governance arrangements for the committee are set out in Appendix A. These may be subject to change, but the spirit of the terms will remain a constant. It is important to note that decision making authority is retained by each individual authority. Any proposals that are developed by the oversight committee will be considered through existing scrutiny and decision-making processes. The oversight committee is not a decision making body, but will explore and promote greater levels of collaboration, alignment and integration of services for the benefit of Greater Lincolnshire.
- 1.7 The committee will consist of two Cabinet Member representatives from each of the three authorities. It is for the Leader of each Council to determine the respective Cabinet Member nominations for committee membership. The Chief Executive of each authority, or a nominated substitute, will also be in attendance. It will be chaired on a rotating basis across the three authorities. There will also be attendance by a co-opted non-voting representative from the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP). The involvement of a representative from the GLLEP ensures the committee takes account of the needs of businesses within Greater Lincolnshire, as well as bringing a detailed understanding of the Greater Lincolnshire region and its economy.
- 1.8 The attendance by Cabinet Members will ensure the necessary strategic oversight and direction for each of the authorities. It is essential that arrangements are put in place to ensure that there is a strategically coherent approach to the design and delivery of upper tier services and the leadership of Greater Lincolnshire to help to ensure that the anticipated benefits are realised.

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

To not participate in any joint forum across the unitary authorities of Greater Lincolnshire would potentially disadvantage North East Lincolnshire and opportunities for joint strategic working on a Place basis would be missed.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Joint working arrangements could be explored informally, or purely through the development of proposals to reform local government in Greater Lincolnshire. However, this could delay the benefit of working closely together until a point where the government is ready to consider the arrangements in Greater Lincolnshire in more detail. The recommended approach enables earlier benefits to be delivered, whilst still enabling reform on a larger scale, if appropriate, in the future.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

There are potential positive reputational issues arising with the clear partnership and collegiate working with public sector partners across the Greater Lincolnshire area. This can only lead to positive outcomes for the residents of the borough. A

clear communication plan will be put in place should the recommendations find favour across all three partner authorities.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed committee will not be a decision-making forum and any decision required will be referred back to individual constituent authorities and be subject to its own internal democratic and policy processes. Therefore, each decision will be subject to robust financial analysis and appraisal. At the moment any financial implications are impossible to quantify.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

As part of joint strategic working and potential alignment of opportunities across Greater Lincolnshire, it is hoped that a positive impact can be achieved around climate and environmental issues.

7. CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY

There has been no consultation with Scrutiny.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As the proposed committee will not be a decision-making forum there are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Joint working across authorities by committee is enabled by the Local Government Act 1972 and other enabling legislation and regulations. Such a committee will be subject to the Local Government Transparency Code in that all agendas, minutes and such like are subject to publication with access to meetings by the public and press. This is further reinforced by the proposed provisions in the terms of reference at Appendix A of this report.

9.2 As laid out in the report, the proposed committee is not a decision-making forum and no delegation of functions to the committee is envisaged at this time. Any decision required will be subject to the Council's democratic and internal processes.

9.3 As a reserved function, Full Council has the responsibility for "*agreeing and/or amending the terms of reference for committees, deciding on their composition and making appointments to them*". Further an amendment to the Constitution will be required so as to incorporate the terms of reference (once fully settled) of the Greater Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Oversight Committee. Therefore, it is prudent to refer the matter to Full Council, should Cabinet support the recommendations above, with Full Council being asked to ratify the agreement to form the committee and permit constitutional change as appropriate.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

11. WARD IMPLICATIONS

All wards may be affected.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

13. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

Rob Walsh Chief Executive

COUNCILLOR PHILIP JACKSON

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

APPENDIX A

Summary of Greater Lincolnshire Strategic Oversight Committee arrangements

The core functions of the Greater Lincolnshire Strategic Oversight Committee are to:

1. Facilitate cooperation and collaboration between Lincolnshire County Council, North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council in so far as it relates to their executive functions on the following themes:
 - a) The development and application of strategy across the Greater Lincolnshire economic region
 - b) The development of opportunities to gain greater strategic alignment across and for Greater Lincolnshire where scale and scope are required and can enhance upper tier functions
 - c) The strategic alignment of investment across Greater Lincolnshire
2. Consider strategic use of public funds across the common functions and activities of the Councils to benefit the economy and support the collective ambitions of the three councils and the region.
3. Act as a formal link between the three upper tier local authorities in Greater Lincolnshire on activity related to the above themes

Terms of Reference

1. Develop and recommend for consideration by each of the authorities' proposals relating to the core functions of the committee.
2. Act as an advocate for investment in the sustainable economic development of Greater Lincolnshire and maintain oversight for delivery arrangements relating to the core functions.
3. Align and make recommendations on capital expenditure programmes that operate across Greater Lincolnshire to ensure the strategic ambitions are effectively delivered in relation to the core functions.
4. Consider reports from sub-regional groups, or other such body or subcommittee/committee and refer recommendations back to the three Councils for further attention.
5. Consider and make recommendations in relation to strategic funding for activities aligned to the core functions.
6. The committee shall comprise of the Leader and one Executive Member from each Council. The committee will be chaired on a rotating basis by the Leader of each of the three local authorities. A co-opted representative

from the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership and be in attendance as a non-voting member.

7. Any recommendations made by the joint committee must be referred back to each of the three authorities for consideration through existing democratic processes.
8. The Secretariat of and accountable body for the Greater Lincolnshire Strategic Overview Committee is Lincolnshire County Council. Meetings are open to the press and public, and agendas, minutes and papers are published by the Secretariat, in line with the Local Government Transparency Code.