

**29 October 2021**

**Agenda Item: 4**

## **REPORT OF THE LEADER OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CASE FOR DEVOLUTION**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. This report seeks approval of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Case for Devolution, attached as **Appendix 1**, and to progress the further work required under the identified themes.

#### **Information**

2. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils have been working together to identify areas for greater collaboration and opportunities to make an even bigger difference for our residents. The “Case for Devolution”, attached as Appendix 1, sets out an ambitious joint vision for how councils could work in partnership to help boost economic investment, improve the environment, and tackle health and educational inequalities across the city and county
3. This new approach is in response to the Government’s call for local leaders to work jointly on the new “levelling up” agenda including devolution – a key initiative to ensure every area has the powers and resources needed to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and ensure economic growth and prosperity.
4. The Government’s Levelling Up White Paper is expected to set out plans for further rounds of local devolution. In readiness for this publication, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils are preparing the case for the city and county to hold greater powers - moving some of those currently controlled by central government in London. Holding powers and funding at a local level will help us to reform services for the better and improve the lives of people who live and work in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.
5. The ambition is to:
  - Attract significant inward investment, boosting economic growth and raising productivity, as well as growing the private sector
  - Raise living standards and achieve a demonstrable reduction in inequalities including in poverty, health and social care;
  - Deliver high quality places to live for all residents;
  - Regenerate our city and town centres, unlocking difficult sites for development;

- Tackle climate change and protect local people from its impacts;
  - Deliver better services for residents;
  - Secure better outcomes and value for money for local taxpayers through public sector reform and efficiencies;
  - See Nottingham and Nottinghamshire realise its true potential as a core city and county working together, restoring local pride.
6. Together Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils have identified five priority themes, all supporting the core aim of changing things for the better for local people:
- Education and Skills
  - Transport
  - Environment
  - Economy and Infrastructure
  - Land and Housing

Scopes are currently being prepared for each priority theme and a verbal update on progress will be provided at the meeting.

7. A long list of other areas has also been prepared and will continue to be developed. These include:
- health and social care;
  - visitor economy, heritage and culture;
  - youth services and support to vulnerable adolescents;
  - community safety, cohesion and reducing reoffending;
  - public sector reform.

A verbal update will be provided at the meeting on progress developing the themes included on the long list.

8. It is proposed to use this committee to act as the governance vehicle for partnership discussions. Councils will come together under the Economic Prosperity Committee (EPC) to determine priorities and ensure distributed leadership across the priority themes and devolved power and resources. An initial review has indicated that the EPC has the potential to be the vehicle for devolution
9. Consideration needs to be given to new branding and a change of name of the committee to ensure that it truly reflects the collaborative approach and scale of ambition. Chief Executives will be asked to develop proposals for consideration.
10. To drive forward this work, it is proposed to establish a new cross-county team and programme budget. These proposals and associated financial implications are covered elsewhere on the agenda, with the costs met jointly by local councils from existing resources.

### **Other Options Considered**

11. Do Nothing - Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils could choose not to respond to the devolution agenda and continue with existing arrangements. This option was rejected as all councils have agreed to explore joint working as a priority and to take no action would

prevent the benefits and opportunities outlined in the report and Appendix 1 from being achieved and utilised.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

12. The right devolution deal would enable all Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils to deliver economic and social prosperity across the city and county. It is therefore important that councils continue to work together to develop the case for change.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

13. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Financial Implications**

14. A report on resourcing implications is covered elsewhere on the agenda.

### **Implications for Service Users**

15. The Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Case for Devolution is ultimately about changing things for the better for local people and giving all our residents and businesses the best possible opportunities and experiences.

### **Implications for Sustainability and the Environment**

16. Enhancing and protecting the local environment and addressing climate change is a priority theme under this programme of work. The intention is to support delivery of existing strategies and cooperation on policy development ahead of the Environment Bill. An ambition is included to accelerate net zero targets for some Councils and assist all to achieve the existing targets set.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

It is recommended that Committee:

- 1) Approve the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Case for Devolution, attached as **Appendix 1**
- 2) Approve further work on the themes listed under paragraphs 6 and 7.

**Councillor Ben Bradley MP**  
**Leader of Nottinghamshire County Council**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**  
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### **Constitutional Comments [SSR 20/10/2021]**

17. The recommendations set out in this report are matters which may be determined by the The City of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee under the terms of reference for the Committee set out in the Committee's constitution.

### **Financial Comments [RWK 20/10/2021]**

18. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All