



**Corporate Policy and
Resources Committee**

Thursday, 21 March 2024

Subject: Establishment of the District Joint Committee for devolution purposes

Report by:

Assistant Director of People and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer

Contact Officer:

Lisa Langdon – Assistant Director of People and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer

Lisa.langdon@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Purpose / Summary:

To update on the progress to date that has been made in relation to establishing a Joint Committee of the 7 Lincolnshire district authorities for the purposes of devolution (as per the recommendation made at the full Council meeting on 22nd January 2024), and to note that a report will proceed to the full Council in due course to seek approval for WLDC to form and participate in a Joint Committee of the Lincolnshire districts.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. To note the work that has been done to date in respect of establishing a Joint Committee of the Lincolnshire district authorities,
2. To note that a report will proceed to full Council seeking authority for West Lindsey District Council to enter into a Joint Committee of the Lincolnshire districts for the purposes of devolution and participation at the Mayoral Combined County Authority

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

The establishment of the Mayoral Combined County Authority is subject to legislative provisions which will be considered by the 3 constituent authorities (Lincolnshire County Council, North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council), however for the purposes of the establishment of a Joint Committee of the district authorities, the relevant legislative provisions are section 11 Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 and section 101 Local Government Act 1972. These provisions provide the legal mechanism to allow WLDC to form a Joint Committee and participate in the Mayoral Combined County Authority.

(N.B. Where there are legal implications the report MUST be seen by the MO)

Financial: There are no direct financial implications in respect of this report

Staffing:

There are no direct human resources implications currently, however discussions are ongoing regarding the facilitation and administration of the District Joint Committee. If there is any impact on existing staffing resources at WLDC these shall be considered, should they arise.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:

As this report is for noting purposes only there are no equality, diversity or human rights implications at this point. Consideration will be given to these implications as and when they arise and Equality Impact Assessments completed as appropriate.

Data Protection Implications:

No implications arising from this report.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

No implications arising from this report.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

No implications arising from this report.

Health Implications:

No implications arising from this report

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Greater Lincolnshire devolution deal 2023 published 22nd November 2023, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, (publicly available document).

Risk Assessment:

Should the Joint Committee not be established, this would likely result in the district authorities not being able to nominate 4 non-constituent members onto the Mayoral Combined County Authority and therefore weakening the voice and view of the district authorities. This risk is being mitigated by the officers within the district authorities meeting regularly to discuss, and by early updates being provided to committee members.

Call in and Urgency:**Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

 X**Key Decision:**

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

 X

1 Background

- 1.1 A devolution agreement for Greater Lincolnshire was announced by the Government in November 2023 and subsequently agreed by Lincolnshire County Council, North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council. These 3 authorities are the constituent members for the purposes of devolution and the creation of the Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA). The 7 district authorities in Lincolnshire are the non constituent members for the purposes of devolution and the MCCA.
- 1.2 The devolution agreement will bring additional funds into Greater Lincolnshire over the next 30 years, such funds totalling £720 million. The additional funding will be used in relation to planning projects, transport projects, economic development and the improvement of skills and education across Greater Lincolnshire.
- 1.3 It is anticipated that the new arrangements will come into existence through an Establishment Order which is expected towards the end of Summer 2024. This will then allow for the establishment of the MCCA with an election of a Greater Lincolnshire Mayor taking place in 2025.
- 1.4 The 3 constituent authorities will lead on the new arrangements and the formation of the MCCA, however it is appreciated that the 7 district authorities in Lincolnshire must still have a voice and be able to represent the interests of the district authorities at the MCCA. The new arrangements therefore allow for the establishment of a Joint Committee of the 7 districts to provide a mechanism for participation at the MCCA.

2. The purpose of the District Joint Committee

- 2.1 The devolution deal document for Greater Lincolnshire published on 22nd November 2023, provides the following paragraph and the officers have been mindful of this paragraph when drafting the documentation that will form the District Joint Committee:

“Paragraph 23. The district and borough councils within Lincolnshire have an important role to play in levelling up Greater Lincolnshire and delivering the shared vision for the area. It is expected that a joint committee of these councils will be formed and that this joint committee will be designated by the MCCA as a nominating body for the purposes of nominating four non-constituent Members of the MCCA. The term of office for non-constituent members would be a matter for the MCCA constitution, but it is expected that non-constituent Members would be appointed annually, with membership rotated among the district and borough councils. The same joint committee could be used to nominate other elected members from the district and borough councils to other places on forums of the MCCA, including Overview and Scrutiny and Audit Committees.”

- 2.2 The purpose of the District Joint Committee will be to establish a collaborative platform for coordination among the non-constituent authorities and be a mechanism through which their interests are represented on the MCCA. The District Joint Committee will seek to enhance efficiency, effectiveness and accountability in the delivery of services and policies within the MCCA and promote the shared interests of the district authorities for the benefit of Greater Lincolnshire.
- 2.3 It is proposed that the District Joint Committee shall have the following scope, noting that a key role is to nominate 4 non-constituent members to participate in the MCCA and to nominate members to the MCCA's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Audit Committee:
- To exercise oversight of the initial formulation and development of the MCCA,
 - To approve or adopt any policy as required by the MCCA,
 - To facilitate joint decision making on matters defined within the MCCA's remit,
 - Where appropriate to oversee the implementation of shared initiatives and policies,
 - Encourage, promote and enable dialogue and cooperation between the 7 non-constituent authorities,
 - To annually nominate 4 non-constituent members to participate in the MCCA, such members to reflect the view and position of the 7 district authorities in their entirety.
 - To nominate members to the MCCA's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Audit Committee in line with the MCCA's requirements for those committees,
 - To consider any matters being discussed/proposed/implemented by the MCCA and provide collective feedback to the MCCA
 - To approve appointment and/or representation of a Member(s) on external bodies or groups where appropriate
- 2.4 It is proposed currently that the membership of the District Joint Committee be the Leader of each district authority, and in their absence a substitute member can be nominated on their behalf.

3. The necessary documentation

- 3.1 The District Joint Committee will require Terms of Reference and Standing Orders. Draft versions of both these documents have been produced by the Monitoring Officers of the districts and are subject to further discussion and amendment.
- 3.2 A Memorandum of Understanding is required between the 3 constituent members and the 7 non constituent members. This is a separate piece of work, and the establishment of the District Joint Committee isn't dependent upon this

MOU being agreed and signed, however it is desirable that the existence of the MOU is acknowledged by the membership of the District Joint Committee and that the documentation isn't contradictory. Therefore, the Terms of Reference for the District Joint Committee refer to this MOU and propose that members will act within the spirit and principles of the document.

- 3.3 The Terms of Reference, Standing Orders and MOU are all currently in draft form and subject to further discussion and amendment.