

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

3 November 2016



Report of: Anna Klonowski, Interim Strategic Director, Business Change

Title: Preparing for Future Devolution Deals

Ward: Citywide

Officer Presenting Report: Andrea Dell, Service Manager, Democratic Engagement

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Recommendation

That the OSMB agree to set up a cross party scrutiny working group to examine the potential for further devolution deals in the West of England region and the potential areas of focus for these deals.

It is proposed that the working group will work collaboratively with the Executive to engage members in shaping the proposals for any future devolution deal, and to act as a point of reference for the Executive.

That members agree that this should be an internal working group rather than a public select committee due to the potentially confidential nature of the information.

Members are asked to consider the relationship between this working group, West of England Joint Scrutiny and the work of the West of England devolution team.

That members note that this proposal was identified as a priority for the 2016/17 Scrutiny work programme at the Scrutiny Workshop on 9th September, and that the Mayor has also proposed this as an area where Scrutiny can add value.

The significant issues in the report are: Paragraphs 1 – 6.



Context

1. The four councils for the West of England area signed a devolution deal with government which was formally announced by the Chancellor in the Budget on 16th March 2016. At its council meeting in June, North Somerset Council decided not to proceed with the deal but the three remaining councils wish to proceed with the Order making process. The benefits of the deal were set out in the Deal Agreement, as presented to Full Council on 29th June 2016, and are in essence that the Mayoral Combined Authority will receive devolved powers and additional funding from government, which will benefit the three council areas.

1.1 The legislation to establish the new Mayoral Combined Authority and deliver the devolved powers will be submitted for approval to the three councils in November 2016, with the intention of it being debated in the Houses of Parliament later in the month.

1.2 A number of other councils who have agreed devolution deals have gone on to develop further devolution agreements with the government. This is evolving national policy but the assumption to date is that authorities who successfully achieved a devolution deal will build from this to achieve further devolved powers via a series of deals. Appendix 1 summarises the successive deals achieved by Manchester and Liverpool. Two examples of this are Greater Manchester and Liverpool.

Proposal

2.0 It is therefore proposed that members agree to set up a cross party scrutiny working group to focus on potential issues for future devolution deals for the West of England region.

2.1 Issues for consideration may include, for example, proposals that were requested but not agreed as part of the existing devolution deal. Members may also wish to consult with other local authorities who are a more advanced stage in developing second and subsequent devolution agreements.

Risk Assessment

3.0 Not applicable

Public Sector Equality Duties

4.0 Not applicable

Financial Implications

5.0 Not applicable

Legal and Resource Implications:

6.0 This work would form part of the Scrutiny work programme and will be resourced from within the resource envelope of the Scrutiny team.

Appendices:

1 – Summary of successive deals achieved by Manchester and Liverpool

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985:

Background Papers:

Agenda Item 18, Combined Authority and Devolution Proposals, Full Council 29th June 2016

<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=142&MIId=246>