



REPORT TO:	Council
DATE:	15 January 2024
SUBJECT:	Devolution Deal for Greater Lincolnshire
PURPOSE:	To update Council on Devolution for Greater Lincolnshire and seek views to inform the Leader of the Council's response to the consultation on the proposed deal.
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Leader of the Council, Councillor Anne Dorrian
REPORT OF:	Assistant Director – Corporate, James Gilbert
REPORT AUTHOR:	Assistant Director – Corporate, James Gilbert
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	N/a
EXEMPT REPORT?	No

SUMMARY

In the Autumn Statement the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, announced that a Devolution Deal had been developed for Greater Lincolnshire.

The development and negotiation of the Deal, which to progress requires the formation of a Mayoral Combined County Authority, with Directly Elected Mayor, was led by Greater Lincolnshire's Upper Tier Councils – Lincolnshire County Council, North East Lincolnshire Council and North Lincolnshire Council.

The Deal is currently out to public consultation. The consultation closes on 29 January, 2024.

This report updates on the proposed Devolution Deal and seeks input from Council Members to inform the Leader's response to the consultation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council notes the progress on the Greater Lincolnshire Devolution as part of the 'Level three deal' offer from the Government.
2. That Council notes that a consultation is currently taking place on the proposed Devolution Deal for Greater Lincolnshire and that Council Members provide their views to inform the Leader of the Council's response to that consultation.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To ensure Council has the latest position regarding the proposed Devolution Deal for Greater Lincolnshire.
2. To ensure the Leader of the Council has wider Member input to inform a response to the consultation.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not discussing the matter in Council – this was discounted.

Devolution - and the formation of a Mayoral Combined County Authority - is an important matter for Greater Lincolnshire. It is important the Council is fully aware of the Deal on offer to Greater Lincolnshire and that views are sought to inform the Leader's response to the consultation. The Council could indicate its support or opposition to the proposal, but ultimately the decision will lie with the upper tier councils, subject to final approval by the Government.

DEVOLUTION – THE DEAL/CONSULTATION

- 1.1 Greater Lincolnshire's Upper Tier Councils - Lincolnshire County Council, North East Lincolnshire Council and North Lincolnshire Council – have negotiated a Devolution Deal with Government. The Deal the Upper Tier Councils have negotiated is set out at Appendix A.
- 1.2 The Deal negotiated is a 'Level 3 Deal', which includes the formation of a Mayoral Combined County Authority with Directly Elected Mayor to be accountable for functions/funding devolved from Government.
- 1.3 The Deal is currently published for consultation until 29 January, 2024, and interested parties are able to have their say to help shape the final Deal at www.letstalk.lincolnshire.gov.uk/. Screen shots from the online consultation questionnaire are also attached at Appendix B.
- 1.4 If progressed, either in its current or amended form following consultation, the Deal would see a range of powers and funding transferred from Government to Greater Lincolnshire. There is the potential for further Devolution Deals with Government thereafter.
- 1.5 The initial Deal that is out to consultation focuses on the following areas:
 - £24m per year for 30 years to level up Greater Lincolnshire.
 - £28.4million has been allocated to Greater Lincolnshire for 2024/25, to be allocated prior to the Mayoral Combined County Authority being established in 2025.*
 - The agreement provides for the devolution of strategy and budgets related to skills, providing local partners with the opportunity to focus on skills development for key local economic sectors.
 - The agreement also provides for devolution of multi-year transport budgets, with flexibility to allocate funds to local priorities.
 - The full proposed deal, a summary of the key points and the devolution proposals are at Appendix A.

* Lincolnshire's District/Borough Councils were invited to put forward ideas and proposals for £20m of the £28.4m for consideration by the County Council. No projects put forward by Boston

Borough Council were supported. The Council area may, however, benefit from a project focused on agri-food but the project detail hasn't yet been published.

- 1.6 Assurance has been provided by the Upper Tier Councils that the proposed Deal doesn't directly impact the services or functions of Lincolnshire's District and Borough Councils.

GOVERNANCE FOR DEVOLUTION

- 1.7 If the Deal progresses, it is likely the election of a Directly Elected Mayor for the Mayoral Combined County Authority will take place in May 2025, alongside the County Council election.

- 1.8 Appendix C sets out the detail around the Mayoral Combined County Authority, including the associated Governance arrangements and how Lincolnshire's District and Borough Councils will be involved.

- The agreement provides for the establishment of a Mayoral Combined County Authority, chaired by a Directly Elected Mayor. The constituent authorities (Lincolnshire County Council, North East Lincolnshire Council and North Lincolnshire Council) will each have two seats on the Mayoral Combined County Authority. District/Borough Councils will be allocated a total of 4 seats, and it is expected that nominations to these seats will be undertaken via a joint committee of District/Borough Councils.
- District/Borough Councils will have voting rights other than in relation to transport and the Mayor's administrative budget.
- District Councils will be allocated seats on a scrutiny panel and several advisory boards.

- 1.9 The Leader of Boston Borough Council has previously written to the Leaders of Lincolnshire County Council, North East Lincolnshire Council and North Lincolnshire Council in regard to the proposed governance. In correspondence the Leader made the request that all District/Borough Councils be provided with a seat on the Mayoral Combined County Authority. This request hasn't been included in the published governance for the Mayoral Combined County Authority.

- 1.10 In 2023, Boston Borough Council received information from Lincolnshire County Council that identified the major capital spend by the County Council for each District/Borough Council area in Lincolnshire from 2017/18 through to 2022/23. The average spend was £65m. Spend in Boston was £23.7m during this period – the lowest in Lincolnshire. £23.7m is 5.2% of the total County Council spend on major capital projects in this period. This works out at £334.86 per Boston resident. The average for Lincolnshire Districts is £583.70 per resident.

From 2023/24 to 2025/26 the information shows £6.8m of planned investment in Boston over the three years - £96.05 per Boston resident. The average for Lincolnshire Districts is £261.93 per resident.

This data highlights the importance of ensuring the Borough of Boston is well represented on Mayoral Combined County Authority.

NEXT STEPS FOR THE DEAL/MAYORAL COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY

- 1.11 The consultation process will conclude on 29 January, 2024.
- 1.12 Consideration of consultation responses and review of the Proposal will be completed by end of February 2024.
- 1.13 Further formal decision making by the Upper Tier Councils in the light of the consultation and if the final Proposal is approved, submission to Government is scheduled to take place in spring 2024.

1.14 Consideration and decision making by Government leading to the laying of an Establishment Order would take place in summer 2024.

1.15 The transition to a formal CCA would follow three stages:

- Stage 1: Establishing transitional arrangements, including those for transport functions which are expected to take no more than 18 months - by summer 2024
- Stage 2: Formal establishment of the Mayoral Combined County Authority – late 2024
- Stage 3: Election of a Greater Lincolnshire Mayor – May 2025

Transition to the CCA is dependent on a number of factors including the Proposal being approved and submitted to the Government following public consultation and the final Proposal then being accepted by Government.

1.16 District/Borough Councils Officers are starting to collaborate to consider the requirements to establishing a Joint Committee to act as a nominating body for the purposes of nominating District/Borough Council Members to the Mayoral Combined County Authority and its associated committees. The formation of joint committee would be subject to a further report, recommendation and decision-making within these authorities.

CONCLUSION

With a Devolution Deal proposed by Government for Greater Lincolnshire following negotiations led by the Upper Tier Councils, it is important the Council actively and constructively engages in the consultation given its impact on the lives of local residents.

EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP

The Partnership is ambitious for its sub-region. Through the Devolution Deal it would want to ensure the Partnership area is well represented both in terms of future benefit from the Deal and through the governance of the Mayoral Combined County Authority.

IMPLICATIONS

SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP

As at 'Expected Benefits to the Partnership'.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

None

STAFFING

None

WORKFORCE CAPACITY IMPLICATIONS

None

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no provision in legislation for district/borough councils, as non-constituent authorities, to approve or otherwise the devolution agreement.

DATA PROTECTION

None

FINANCIAL

The Deal does secure more funding for Greater Lincolnshire, via the Devolution of functions from Government. There would be minor costs to the Council associated with any attendance at meetings.

RISK MANAGEMENT

None

STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES

None

REPUTATION

None

CONTRACTS

None

CRIME AND DISORDER

None

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING

None

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

None

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None

LINKS TO 12 MISSIONS IN THE LEVELLING UP WHITE PAPER

MISSIONS	
This paper contributes to the following Missions outlined in the Government’s Levelling Up White paper.	
Living Standards	By 2030, pay, employment and productivity will have risen in every area of the UK, with each containing a globally competitive city, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.
Research and Development	By 2030, domestic public investment in Research & Development outside the Greater South East will increase by at least 40% and at least one third over the Spending Review period, with that additional government funding seeking to leverage at least twice as much private sector investment over the long term to stimulate innovation and productivity growth.
Transport Infrastructure	By 2030, local public transport connectivity across the country will be significantly closer to the standards of London, with improved services, simpler fares and integrated ticketing.
Digital Connectivity	By 2030, the UK will have nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population.
Education	By 2030, the number of primary school children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths will have significantly increased. In England, this will mean 90% of children will achieve the expected standard, and the percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the worst performing areas will have increased by over a third.
Skills	By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high-quality skills training annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas.

Health	By 2030, the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by 5 years.
Wellbeing	By 2030, well-being will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.
Pride in Place	By 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.
Housing	By 2030, renters will have a secure path to ownership with the number of first-time buyers increasing in all areas; and the government's ambition is for the number of non-decent rented homes to have fallen by 50%, with the biggest improvements in the lowest performing areas.
Crime	By 2030, homicide, serious violence, and neighbourhood crime will have fallen, focused on the worst-affected areas.
Local Leadership	By 2030, every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal with powers at or approaching the highest level of devolution and a simplified, long-term funding settlement.

APPENDICES

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -

APPENDIX A	Greater Lincolnshire Devolution Dela
APPENDIX B	The Devolution Deal consultation
APPENDIX C	Greater Lincolnshire Combined Authority Proposal

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Background papers used in the production of this report are listed below: -

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
N/a	

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT

Name of body	Date
N/a	

REPORT APPROVAL

Report author:	James Gilbert, Assistant Director – Corporate
Signed off by:	Rob Barlow, Joint Chief Executive
Approved for publication:	Councillor Anne Dorrian, Leader of the Council