

Health and Wellbeing Board

23rd September 2015

Combined Authority & Devolution Plans – Update

Recommendation(s)

That the Board notes the devolution developments across the region

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Proposals to create combinations of Local Authorities working together as Combined Authorities (CAs) or Economic Prosperity Boards (EPBs) were first introduced in the Sub-National Review of Economic Development (2007) and later brought forward in the Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act (2009).
- 1.2 Combined Authorities/Economic Prosperity Boards are designed for groups of Local Authorities (unitary, county or district) who wish to work more closely together to deliver improvements in economic development, regeneration and, in relation to CAs transport across the designated area. These arrangements are voluntary and no area can be forced to join a CA/EPB should they not wish to do so.
- 1.3 In the wake of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority deal, 38 bids have now been submitted to Government for devolution deals, including but not restricted to proposals for Combined Authorities that includes the proposal from the seven West Midland Metropolitan Authorities. The list includes: Cornwall; D2N2 (Derbyshire, Derby City, Nottingham, Nottingham City); Herefordshire, Leeds, Leicester and Leicestershire; Norfolk; Oxfordshire. The full list is attached to this report as Appendix A
- 1.4 Gloucestershire has also put forward proposals for Devolution to government. The 'We are Gloucestershire' statement of intent was developed by Gloucestershire County Council, the six District Councils, GFirst LEP, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).
- 1.5 This paper informs Warwickshire's Health and Wellbeing Board of the proposals being explored regionally.

2.0 The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Proposal

2.1 In July 2015 the seven Metropolitan Authorities in the West Midlands proposed to set up a new governance structure – the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) –and published a Launch Statement, with the endorsement of the chairs of the three Local Enterprise Partnerships in the Area (Coventry & Warwickshire, Greater Birmingham & Solihull and the Black Country) The launch statement, attached as Appendix B sets out the early priorities that the WMCA would focus on as follows:

- Development of an overarching Strategic Economic Plan for the West Midlands
- Access to Finance and a Collective Investment Vehicle
- Strategic Transport Networks
- Creation of an Economic Policy & Intelligence Capacity
- Joint Programme on Skills

2.2 To facilitate this work, the Launch Statement indicated that three independent commissions would be established. One of these focuses on mental health and public services, exploring the role that mental health problems play in some of the key social and employment problems faced in the West Midlands, the cost and impact across the whole of public services and exploring best practice and new ways of working.

2.3 Coventry City Council is a signatory to the Launch Statement and has agreed that joint consultation by the seven West Midlands Metropolitan Councils on setting up a combined authority for the West Midlands should take place in Coventry. Coventry City Council have a full Council meeting on the 13th October to make a final decision on becoming a member of the WMCA.

2.4 Warwickshire County Council agreed on 3rd September not to enter into the West Midlands Combined Authority as proposed, to continue to support and pursue the Coventry-Warwickshire Combined Authority as its preferred devolution model and to establish a member working group to explore alternative devolution models for Warwickshire.

2.5 The five District & Borough Councils in Warwickshire are all considering their positions with meetings taking place in September and October.

2.6 A combined authority area can only cover the area of the local authorities who agree to be constituent authorities. Under current legislation, there are barriers in two tier areas which would prevent one tier of local government becoming a constituent member if the other tier was not. The current WMCA proposal assumes that Warwickshire County Council and any of the Districts and Boroughs of Warwickshire would only be able to join on a non-constituent basis (ie as a non-voting member).

3.0 Health and Social Care for Warwickshire

- 3.1 Warwickshire's 3 Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and the County Council have been working closely together to deliver a vision for health and social care for Warwickshire for the next 5 years.
- 3.2 The vision is well documented in the Better Care Fund submissions of 2014 and the CCGs' Transformational Change: Transforming Lives Strategic Plan for 2014-2019.
- 3.3 Locally, Health and Social Care partners have actively sought opportunities to work as a single system, and continue to find ways of organising health and social care provision in order to meet the needs of the user, aware that the boundaries of each organisation should be invisible to patients. The key has been to ensure that services are aligned to an agreed vision.
- 3.4 Regardless of which governance structures and devolution models are pursued, Health and Social Care organisations supporting the Warwickshire population will need to continue to work together to transform local services so that we can maintain and improve quality, meet the developing needs of our population, and do this within a challenging financial environment. This work will need to be set in the context of local population need and priorities, taking into account that our communities will continue to use the logical pathways of movement for their daily lives – employment, transport, leisure, and of course, healthcare – all of which have a bearing on health and wellbeing and will naturally involve patient flows between Warwickshire and Coventry.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 It is proposed that as the devolution models for Warwickshire are further developed, at an appropriate stage, the Health and Wellbeing Board considers the potential implications for health and social care and the wider health and wellbeing landscape.

5.0 Appendices

- A. West Midlands Combined Authority Launch Statement.
- B. List of submissions to Government of proposed devolution deals

6.0 Background Papers

The 3rd September 2015 Warwickshire County Council papers provide more detailed information and are available at www.warwickshire.gov.uk under current committee papers.

Other papers referenced in this report are available on request from the report author.

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