

## Agenda No

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Name of Committee** North Warwickshire Area Committee

**Date of Committee** 21<sup>st</sup> November 2007

**Report Title** Locality Proposals for the North Warwickshire Area

**Summary** This report follows on from the decision of the Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2007 and seeks the views of the Area Committee on the current position relating to the development of locality proposals for North Warwickshire

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**Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy** No

**Framework?** [please identify relevant plan/budget provision]  
**Background papers**

Report to Cabinet dated 18<sup>th</sup> October 2007 'The development of Locality Proposals for Warwickshire – a Progress Report'

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-**

Details to be specified

Other Committees  .....

Local Member(s)  .....

Other Elected Members  .....

Cabinet Members  Cllr Peter Fowler

Chief Executive  Jim Graham, Chief Executive

- Legal  Greta Needham, Sarah Duxbury, Sian Stroud
- Finance  David Clarke
- Other Strategic Directors  William Brown – Community Protection  
 Marion Davis – Children Young People & Families  
 John Deegan – Environment & Economy  
 Graeme Betts - Adult Health & Community Services
- District Councils  Ongoing discussions are taking place with the District Council concerning the development of these proposals
- Health Authority  Preliminary discussions have taken place with the PCT concerning the countywide proposals and it is intended that further discussions take place in the near future
- Police  Ongoing discussions are taking place with the Police and Police Authority concerning the development of these proposals
- Other Bodies/Individuals  The Town and Parish Councils have so far been consulted through Warwickshire Association of Local Councils who have suggested that individual consultation takes place with each Town and Parish Council concerning the proposals – we are in the process of establishing this consultation with a view to their comments being reported to the Cabinet at its meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2007

**FINAL DECISION** **No**

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:** Details to be specified

- Further consideration by the Cabinet  On 6<sup>th</sup> December 2007
- To Council  On 11<sup>th</sup> December 2007
- To Cabinet  .....
- To an O & S Committee  .....
- To an Area Committee  .....
- Further Consultation  .....

**Agenda No****North Warwickshire Area Committee – 21<sup>st</sup> November 2007****Locality Proposals for the North Warwickshire  
Area****Report of the Strategic Director of Performance &  
Development****Recommendations:**

1. That the contents of the Report are noted
2. That the views of the Area Committee (see 2.6) are relayed to the Cabinet when it next considers the proposals at its meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2007.

**1 Background**

- 1.1 This matter was last considered by each of the Area Committees during the meeting cycle in July 2007. Subsequently, further consultation and development of the proposals has taken place leading to the consideration of more detailed proposals by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2007.
- 1.2 The report to Cabinet summarised the progress made to date in the consultation arrangements on locality working and recommended a) that the Cabinet agreed to the development of detailed proposals for each area of the county based on a series of recommendations contained in the report and b) that consultation should continue for a further short period of time with a view to the proposals being considered by the Area Committees and the Cabinet and recommendations made to the Council on 11th December 2007.

**2. The report to Cabinet of 18<sup>th</sup> October 2007**

- 2.1 Cabinet agreed to the development of detailed proposals for each area of the county. In respect of the North Warwickshire Area in particular, Cabinet agreed that the proposal should be based on four Area Forums that are currently in operation subject to a minor boundary alteration between South and East. The proposed boundaries are attached in the penultimate page of this report.
- 2.2 Cabinet recognised that these proposals would be subject to refinement as part of the detailed discussions with partners and asked that further reports be presented to the current round of Area Committees and to the Cabinet on 6 December 2007 with a view to making recommendations to Council on 11 December 2007.

2.3 In respect of North Warwickshire it was made clear at Cabinet:

- That it was important to continue with the Area Committee function to enable scrutiny of issues, such as education and transport at local level.
- That the Area Committees should be run in parallel with the Area Fora in the first instance to see how they work.
- That the Localities Option Map 3 was the preferred option because the areas fitted in with the Safer Neighbourhood Police areas, and would be easier for partner organisations to maintain. This would involve a change in the boundaries between the existing Area Forums East and South.
- The situation should be reviewed in 12 months time or in any event after the next elections.

2.4 The Cabinet report of 18<sup>th</sup> October 2007 is attached to this report as Appendix One. This report confirms the strategic context for the development of locality proposals and summarised the progress that had been made with the consultation to date. In particular, the report suggested:

- That there is no 'one size fits all' proposal that can be universally applied to the five areas of the county
- The advantages of public sector bodies working collaboratively in their efforts to localise their approach to community engagement, service planning and delivery
- That this approach is concerned with providing:
  - Greater opportunities for local residents and their representatives to influence the services that they receive locally and to hold service providers to account
  - A joined approach to tackling difficult issues in local communities
  - An enhanced front line role for elected members as community leaders

2.5 The Cabinet report also contains detailed information about the core membership of Locality Fora, their purposes and the likely issues that they would be dealing with.

2.6 The Area Committee views are now sought on the following:

- The membership of the Locality Fora
- A suggestion that the Area Manager should liaise with individual members to ensure that appropriate local groups are contacted and encouraged to engage with the Locality Forum
- Any particular matters or issues that they would wish to see included in the Terms of Reference for the Fora

- A suggestion that a report on the progress of the Locality Fora (including a short description of the issues raised by each Forum) should be brought to the Area Committee three times per year

David Carter  
Strategic Director of Performance & Development  
October 2007

# The Cabinet

## Report of the Strategic Director for Performance and Development

18<sup>th</sup> October 2007

### The development of Locality Proposals for Warwickshire – a Progress Report

#### **Recommendations:**

1. That Cabinet agrees to the development of detailed proposals based on the following:
  - Four Localities and Advisory Fora in North Warwickshire based on map 1. Appendix 1
  - Five Localities and Advisory Fora in Nuneaton and Bedworth based on map 2 in Appendix 1, noting that there may be a phased approach.
  - Four Localities with up to six Advisory Fora in Rugby based on map 3, Appendix 1
  - Three Localities with Joint Committees in the Stratford on Avon area to be integrated with six advisory meetings, based on map 4, Appendix 1
  - Five Localities with up to six Advisory Fora in Warwick based on map 5, Appendix 1
2. That Cabinet recognises that these proposals will be subject to refinement as part of the detailed discussions with partners.
3. That further reports are presented to the next round of Area Committees and to Cabinet on 6 December 2007 with a view to making recommendations to Council on 11 December 2007.

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Government policy on locality working is contained within a series of White papers and legislative proposals – for example the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill and Police Reform. In general terms, these proposals are concerned with ensuring greater public involvement in the

shaping of local services and championing neighbourhood working across the public sector.

1.2 On 10<sup>th</sup> May 2007, the Cabinet considered a detailed report entitled 'A Discussion Paper - Locality Proposals for Warwickshire – Responsive Services and Empowered Communities'. Following detailed consideration, Cabinet requested that further work and consultation should take place with a particular emphasis on full engagement with elected members through the Area Committees and key partner agencies.

1.3 Over recent months, we have:

- Conducted a series of meetings with our Area Committees
- Had detailed discussions with senior officers of the District and Borough Councils
- Continued to actively engage with the Police (both Authority and the Police)
- Consulted with representatives of the Warwickshire PCT, and the Town and Parish Councils
- Taken forward discussions regarding Locality Working across the Directorates of the County Council

1.4 In so doing, we have focused on a number of specific issues:

- The overall purpose and merits of developing proposals for Locality Working
- The establishment of locality boundaries for each area of the County
- The development of local mechanisms (including the options for governance arrangements) to underpin Locality Working

1.5 This paper describes the progress made and issues raised to date. It will be seen that one of the clear outcomes from the consultation to date and our subsequent deliberations is that there is no 'one size fits all' proposal that fits the needs of and issues faced by the County as a whole. Perhaps this is not surprising as it is the very essence of locality working that proposals should reflect local circumstance and be locally responsive.

1.6 Overall, whilst good progress has been made, we are not yet in a position to recommend to the Cabinet a final detailed series of proposals to enable the immediate implementation of Locality Working across the county. Further work is required over the coming months and we hope to be in a position to present a conclusive report to Cabinet and the Council at meetings to be held on 6<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> December respectively.

## **2 Summary of the proposed approach to Locality Working**

2.1 It is recommended that the proposals should be based on twenty-one Localities in which the County Council and its partners will seek to integrate responsive, seamless Public Services addressing the particular needs of each Locality.

However, it is recognised that there is a political desire in some areas, particularly where there is a widespread rural population, to have a greater

number of Advisory Fora to inform locality working. Consequently, it is recommended that in the first instance, up to twenty-eight Advisory Fora be developed.

Maps showing the likely boundaries of the proposed Locality Fora are shown at Appendix One and a table showing the proposed Locality Areas and Fora is shown at Appendix Two.

- 2.2 Many of our public services are already engaged in a process of ‘localising’ their approach to community engagement, planning and service-delivery – this is most notably the case in relation to Warwickshire Police who have established a clear countywide approach to Safer Neighbourhood Policing which has involved the establishment of a network of locally based PACT (Police & Communities Together) Panels and Fora in respect of which boundaries have already been established.
- 2.3 In taking forward this approach across the Council and with our partners, we are very keen to incorporate the work of Warwickshire Police. In particular, the PACT Fora and Panels have been operating for about twelve months with a focus on Neighbourhood Policing issues. An integrated approach to broader Locality working will provide added value, avoid duplication of time and effort, build on good practice and provide simpler communication channels with local communities.
- 2.4 Some of the benefits would be:
- Greater opportunities for local residents and their representatives to have a say as to how local services are delivered and hold service-providers to account
  - Greater local access to a range of local services
  - Tailored services to meet local needs
  - Enhanced opportunities to support local agencies to deliver local services
  - A joined-up approach to tackling difficult issues in local communities
  - An enhanced ‘front-line’ role for elected Councillors as community leaders
- 2.5 The Key Principles underpinning our proposed approach to Locality working are:
- Public service providers (along with community, voluntary & private sector services where appropriate) working together to provide services tailored to local needs
  - Service-providers using common structures for engaging with and consulting with local communities
  - Local people better able to define local priorities and hold service providers to account
  - Local communities better supported to develop their capacity to influence, shape and deliver services
  - Ensuring the establishment of clearer linkages between Local Strategic Partnerships and the communities that they serve



2.6 In order to ensure a balance between ‘community identity’ and ‘manageability’, Localities should be:

- within the range of 15,000 – 30,000 people
- as far as possible co-terminus with existing electoral boundaries
- as far as possible co-terminus with existing public service arrangements

2.7 It is intended that each Locality should be overseen by a single, over-arching Forum or Committee and that, wherever possible, these should evolve out of existing arrangements such as Safer Neighbourhoods Panels, Electoral Divisional Panels and Area Forums (for example the four Area Fora that have been operating in North Warwickshire for more than five years).

2.8 The core membership of Locality Fora should involve:

- Elected County, District, Town and/or Parish Councillors representing the Locality
- Representatives from the Police and Health

Where the meeting is a Joint Committee, only the County and District/Borough members will be entitled to vote.

2.9 The purposes of the Locality Fora would be to:

- Enable County, District, Town and Parish Councillors, along with local stakeholders and residents, to shape local services.
- Act as a single point of focus for local discussion and consultation, enabling public participation and identifying needs of all sections of the local community
- Agree actions and priorities – both in response to residents’ concerns and to agree the best way of delivering strategic priorities at a local level
- Ensure the accountability of public services to local communities
- Improve coordination between local services
- Enhance links between local people, Councillors, Public Services, and Strategic Partnerships
- Manage local expectations about what can and cannot be delivered

Where the meeting is a Joint Committee, it would also have formal decision making powers

2.10 The agenda of Locality Fora would depend on local community issues, but are likely to include: cleaning up streets, parks and open spaces; traffic, transport, road safety and maintenance issues; facilities and activities for children and teenagers; Crime & Community Safety; Health Services; affordable housing; Sports, leisure and cultural facilities and other amenities; planning issues; local employment and volunteering opportunities.

2.11 Responsibility for servicing arrangements should be shared between local stakeholders, although it might be necessary for either the County or District/Borough Council to retain overall responsibility to ensure the consistency and frequency of meetings, attendance and agenda management

and to take forward any actions arising. Any formal decision-making arrangements between the local authorities, at locality level, would require servicing in accordance with local government committee legislation.

- 2.12 There are essentially two options regarding the powers of Locality bodies, as detailed below. Whichever option is chosen, it may be prudent to suggest that a review is undertaken after 12 months to consider the effectiveness of the arrangements and any potential enhancements.

***Option One: That Locality bodies do not have formal statutory decision-making powers (i.e. Locality Fora)***

Locality Fora will be primarily ‘advisory fora’ and would:

- Shape and endorse strategies and targets relating to the Locality, through the development of a Locality Plan or otherwise.
- Informally agree which individual or agency would take forward issues and actions arising from residents’ concerns
- Oversee and steer local projects and initiatives
- Endorse actions and set priorities. This could include, for instance, the setting of priorities for the local Safer Neighbourhoods Police Teams. Councillors may also soon be granted some individual powers (through the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill), which could be delegated to the Locality body for its consideration.
- Advise other bodies around decisions relating to their Locality, and there would be a clear expectation that public bodies consult with the relevant Locality before making decisions which directly affect that Locality.
- Agree the allocation of funds to local community projects, so long as the fund-holding body retained the final decision.

***Option Two: That Locality bodies have clearly defined decision-making powers, delegated from the County and District Councils and other bodies (i.e. Joint Committees)***

- Locality Committees would be able to perform all the functions listed in option one, and would also have clearly defined decision-making powers, delegated by County and District Councils and other public bodies.
- This could include decisions around a range of local issues, including grants for community projects; road safety, traffic management and highway maintenance and possibly some waste disposal, planning and environmental matters.
- Under current legislation, this arrangement would involve a joint committee comprising County and District Council members. Other agencies can be represented but will not have the power to vote on matters which require a District or County Council decision. (This position may alter as legislation changes).

### **3. Consultation with Area Committees and District: Borough Councils**

3.1 During the July cycle of Area Committees, detailed consultation has taken place with elected members, with all of the Area Committees considering proposals that related to:

- a) The Principles of Locality Working (as set out in paragraph 2 above)
- b) A range of options relating to the delineation of Locality Boundaries.
- c) The role of the proposed Locality Fora and their relationship with the existing Area Committee

3.2 Meetings have also taken place with the Chief Executives of the District: Borough Councils in order to ensure wherever possible a shared approach to the establishment of Locality Working.

3.3 The results of the consultation to date are as follows:

#### **3.3.1 North Warwickshire**

##### **a) Area Committee**

- That it was important to continue with the Area Committee function to enable scrutiny of issues, such as education and transport at local level.
- That the Area Committees should be run in parallel with the Area Fora in the first instance to see how they work.
- That the Localities Option Map 3 was the preferred option because the areas fitted in with the Safer Neighbourhood Police areas, and would be easier for partner organisations to maintain. This would involve a change in the boundaries between the existing Area Forums East and South.
- The situation should be reviewed in 12 months time or in any event after the next elections.

##### **b) North Warwickshire Borough Council**

The four Area Forums have been in existence for some years and form an excellent basis for future Locality Working. The existing boundaries for the Area Forums were reviewed recently following a consultation and although there is no objection in principle to the proposed boundary alteration, it would be necessary for this to be considered by Borough Council elected members and others.

#### **3.3.2 a) Warwick Area Committee**

Some support expressed support for the proposals. Members also expressed a number of concerns including:

- There was scepticism as to whether the proposals would be effective
- There was a need to clarify whether the proposals involved the establishment of decision making or advisory forums
- The Area Committee should be retained

- More work would be required to consider the impact of the proposals on existing bodies, for example the Town & Parish Councils

#### **b) Warwick District Council**

Strong Support expressed by the Chief Executive for the proposals and a commitment to develop and implement the proposals in partnership with the County Council

#### **3.3.3 a) Stratford Area Committee**

The matter has been considered on two occasions by the Committee and the current position is:

- Three Joint Committees (i.e. Joint Committees of the County and District Councils) should be established
- Each Joint Committee should be supported by and fully integrated with 2 Locality Fora. Thus, one Joint Committee could include the Studley/Henley and Alcester/Bidford forums, one the Wellesbourne /Kineton and Feldon /Southam forums and the third Stratford and Stour forums.
- The Joint Committees should in due course replace the existing Area Committee
- A plan indicating the potential areas for the joint committees is attached in Appendix One to this report – further work may be required to finalise the boundaries applying to the Locality Fora.
- The Joint Committees would include both District and County Councillors as representatives for that particular area, would be formal committees and would exercise specific responsibilities delegated to them by both District and County Councils
- Further work is to be carried out identify those responsibilities that could be delegated to the Joint Committees

#### **b) Stratford District Council**

A report was considered and agreed by the District Council's Executive on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007, this recommended the establishment of the three Joint Committees. Further information on the decisions made by the Executive will be available to the meeting of the Cabinet

#### **3.2.4 a) Rugby Area Committee**

The following comments were made at the Area Committee meeting:

- In terms of geographical boundaries, all Members who spoke favoured Map Option 1, although it was considered that some of the exact boundaries, particularly between Rugby Town West and East might need to be explored further

- The majority of elected members expressed strong support for the retention of the existing Area Committee with the Locality Fora operating alongside locality arrangements
- Support was expressed for continuation of both Area Committees and the rural Electoral Divisional Panels and for the view that Locality proposals should wherever possible build on existing arrangements (e.g. PACTs and EDPs)
- Some Members expressed the view that the continuous re-branding of local meetings might further confuse and disengage the public.

#### **b) Rugby Borough Council**

Strong support expressed by the Chief Executive for the Borough and County Councils continuing to work closely together regarding locality proposals and building on existing arrangements with the PACTs. Subsequently, the Borough Council has raised issues regarding the preferred option of locality boundaries and further work is required to resolve this.

#### **3.2.5 a) Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee**

The Area Committee at its meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> July expressed a number of concerns about the proposals and have made it clear that they could see little value in the establishment of a locality working approach in the area, making clear that:

- A wide range of community groups, including the Area Committee already existed in the area and to introduce another level of local government would confuse the public.
- There was the need for evidence to support the proposal and for evidence that locality working would improve services.
- Nuneaton and Bedworth is unique in that they did not have parish or town councils. The proposals were considered more appropriate for an area such as Birmingham where there were areas of dense population.
- That the locality map options and the division of the area was unworkable alongside existing Member commitments to attend PACT and similar meetings
- That the administrative costs associated with creating five locality areas was of concern.
- With the reservations expressed the locality boundaries shown in Option 1 was supported (attached within Appendix One to this report)
- The Area Committee should be retained

Further consideration was given to the proposals by elected members during an informal session held on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2007. Whilst the above reservations were repeated, elected members noted the success of many of the PACT meetings locally and some members expressed a willingness to consider trials of locality working based on extended the role of existing PACT fora beyond Community Safety issues.

## **b) Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council**

A preliminary meeting has taken place with the Chief Executive of the Borough Council who is keen to engage with the County Council on the establishment of locality working. However, no discussions have as yet taken place with elected members of the Borough Council regarding the matter.

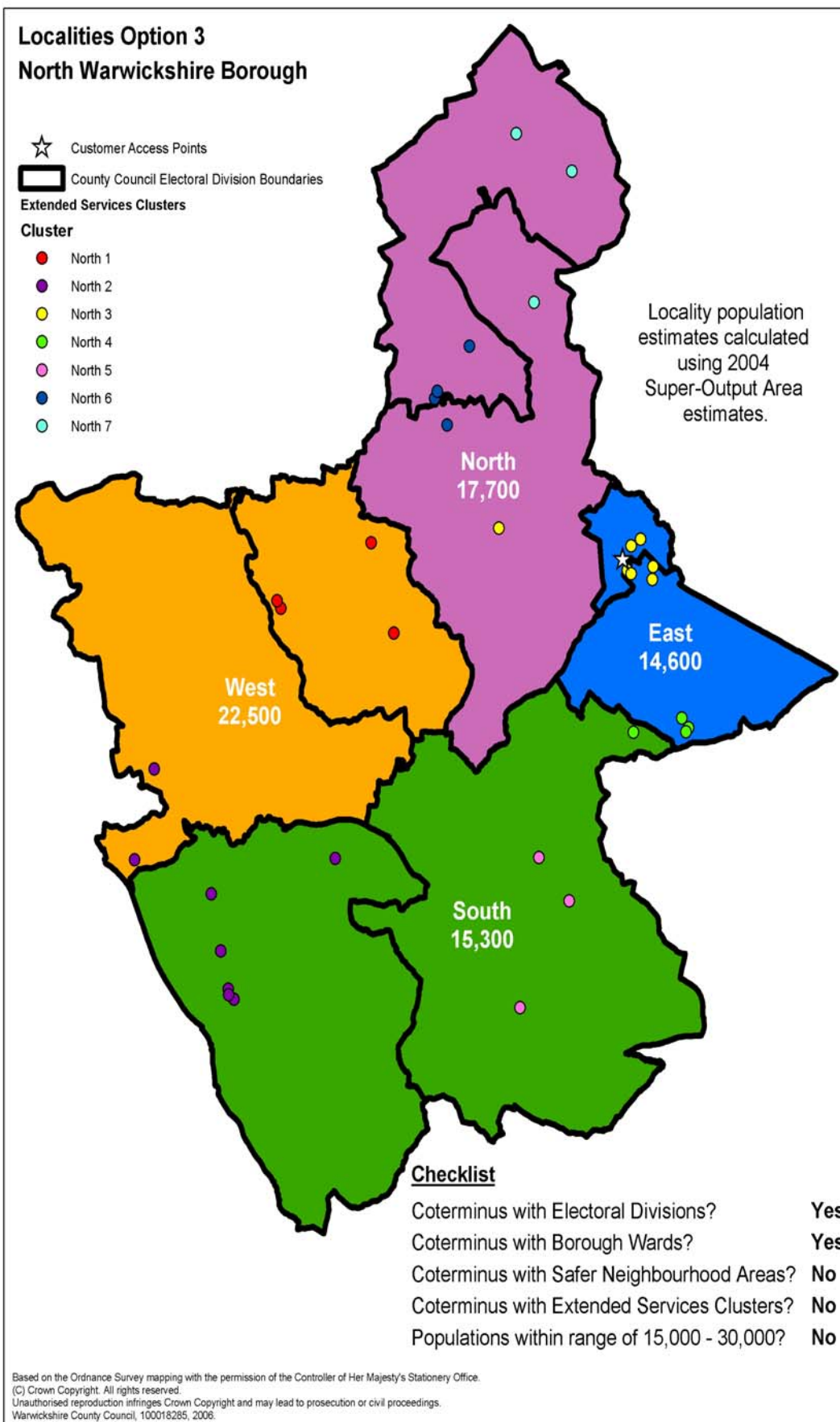
### **4. Consultation with other Key Partners**

- 4.1 In addition to consultation with elected members and District: Borough Councils, we have so far engaged with partners from Warwickshire Police (both Force and Authority), Town and Parish Councils (through Warwickshire Association of Local Councils) Warwickshire PCT and organisations from the Voluntary and Community Sector.
- 4.2 Discussions with Warwickshire Police have been particularly helpful with both the Force and Authority actively working alongside us to build on the progress made through Safer Neighbourhoods Policing and the PACTs. In particular, a pragmatic and flexible approach has been taken to the potential redefinition of PACT boundaries with the Police being prepared to agree to minor adjustments of the existing boundaries so long as these would be acceptable to both the County Council and District: Borough Councils. The Police consider that the development of Locality Working provides a real opportunity to build on the success of Safer Neighbourhoods and in particular make the process of community engagement, the identification of neighbourhood priorities and partnership based problem solving more inclusive and efficient. They consider that this should lead to increased protection for communities and greater community confidence and satisfaction at neighbourhood level.
- 4.3 Warwickshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) has taken the view that the County Council should
- a) Consult Parish Councils individually on these proposals
  - b) Give further consideration to the considerable problems of participation, representation and service delivery for those parish and town councils where the proposed locality boundaries cut across their parishes.
  - c) Individual parishes must receive an invitation to attend the Forum, and not be represented by two three parish councillors to represent a group of parishes.
  - d) Parish and Town councillors as elected representatives must be given the same voting rights as borough and county councillors.
- 4.4 It seems from our initial discussions with Warwickshire PCT is, in principle, in favour of collaborating on the joint planning of some services at a locality level but that, at this stage have some concerns about their capacity to do this effectively.

## **5. Summary and Proposed Way Forward**

- 5.1 At this stage it is clear that there is no universal one size fits all model to be recommended – different solutions are suggested for different areas of the county.
- 5.2 Following this meeting of the Cabinet, further consultation is required both with our Area Committees and key partners on the delineation of locality boundaries and the detail of governance arrangements for the proposed Locality bodies. It is to be hoped that this will be concluded before the end of November with a view to a final report being submitted to Cabinet on 6<sup>th</sup> December, and the Council on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2007.

David Carter  
Strategic Director for Performance & Development  
28th September 2007





## Appendix Two

Table showing proposed Locality Areas and Locality Fora

District: Borough	Map No.	Localities	Proposed Locality Fora
North Warwickshire	One	North East West South	North East West South
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Two	East Nuneaton West Nuneaton Central & South Nuneaton  East Bedworth & Bulkington  West Bedworth	East Nuneaton West Nuneaton Central & South Nuneaton East Bedworth & Bulkington West Bedworth
Rugby	Three	Rugby Rural   Town North   Town West   Town East	Rugby Rural North Rugby Rural Central Rugby Rural South   Town North   Town West   Town East
Stratford	Four	Alcester Studley & Henley   Southam Wellesbourne & Kineton   Stratford & Shipston	Alcester & Studley Henley   Wellesbourne/Kineton Feldon/Southam   Stratford Stour
Warwick	Five	Kenilworth   Rural   Warwick   North Leamington   South Leamington & Whitnash	Kenilworth   Rural East Rural West   Warwick   North Leamington   South Leamington Whitnash