

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 17 SEPTEMBER 2015

A DEVOLUTION PROPOSAL FOR TELFORD & WREKIN

REPORT OF THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR KULDIP SAHOTA

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

- 1.1 In July 2015, the Chancellor of the Exchequer published a policy paper "Spending Review 2015: A country that lives within its means", which set out the Government's approach to Spending Review 2015. Within this the Chancellor asked all Secretary of States to proactively consider what they could devolve to local areas and where they could facilitate integration between public services. Representative bodies, interest groups and individuals were invited to submit written representations to HM Treasury by 4 September 2015.
- 1.2 The date of the announcement and submission deadline fell over the Summer period where no Cabinet meetings were scheduled. Working with members of the Cabinet, work was completed over the Summer to prepare a proposal and ensure Telford and Wrekin Council could keep its options open and retain the ability to hold further conversations with Government around this agenda.
- 1.3 On the 4 September a proposal from Telford and Wrekin was submitted to HM Treasury. The proposal set out a series of suggestions for the devolution of a range of powers and responsibilities for consideration by the Government.
- 1.4 These suggestions built on the existing and very positive relationship that the Council has with the HCA and the 'Strengthening Families' approach taken by the Council and local partners with the aim of accelerating the delivery of sustainable economic growth, increasing prosperity in the borough and reducing demand and costs for the public purse.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet	
2.1	Note and endorse the Devolution proposal submitted on the 4th September 2015.
2.2	Delegate authority to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Leader and the Cabinet portfolio holder for Business, Neighbourhood and Customer Services to enter into discussions with HM Treasury and other Government departments and organisations as appropriate with the aim of developing a detailed arrangement for devolution of powers as outlined in the proposal submitted on 4th September 2015 for consideration by Cabinet and Council in due course.

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	All
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	No	Borough wide impact
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	September 2015 – submission of proposal	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT		The Government are seeking to reduce the national budget deficit by 2019/20. This requires significant reductions in spending to be made and better value to be achieved from public resources. “Devolution deals” offer the opportunity to develop further innovation in the provision of public services and to deliver better value for money for taxpayers. It is therefore very important that the Council retains the ability to engage in this opportunity. As negotiations proceed full financial support will be provided as appropriate. (KC 04/09/15)
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	Obviously the legal implications depend upon the nature of any proposals that are proposed however the Council is only at this stage responding to an invitation to express an interest and outline proposals for the transfer of powers from central government to local government. No

		decisions or commitments have been made and further Cabinet and Council approval would be required where detailed legal comment would be provided.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	No	The proposal sets out a number of opportunities. Impacts and potential risks will be assessed through any discussions that take place. As stated above, no decisions or commitments are being made at this stage.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	Borough wide impact

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

Devolution Deal

- 4.1 The deal sets out a series of proposals for agreement between Telford and Wrekin and the Government for the devolution of a range of powers and responsibilities. Building on the HCA Land Deal and the Troubled Families approach, working in partnership with our public sector and private colleagues within the Borough, this agreement would enable Telford and Wrekin to accelerate delivery of sustained economic growth and increased prosperity in the borough – one of the key areas in the spending review for prioritising spending.
- 4.2 A summary of the main proposals is set out below. The full proposal can be found in appendix 1.
- **Enterprise Telford** - Driving the competitiveness of Telford as a place to invest –through local freedoms and flexibilities granted by Government tailoring our offer to potential investors and supporting sale of our HCA land assets.
 - **Employment and Skills** - joining together national and local programmes built on our local understanding of communities and the labour market, including DWP and our Job Box initiatives.
 - **Transport** - Transfer of powers to franchise all bus services – connecting our more deprived communities to local employment opportunities.

Future Devolution and Next Steps

- 4.3 The first phase of the devolution deal is focused on skills, business support and transport initiatives. The government is committed to further radical devolution of power within England, giving local leaders more opportunity to drive efficiencies by bringing budgets and powers

closer to the point of use.

- 4.4 A report will be brought back to Cabinet in due course to include an updated position once conversations with Government have started to take place further to the submission of the devolution proposal.

5 IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 None.

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