

REPORT OF CABINET

(Meeting held on 2 September 2015)

1. HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT DEVOLUTION PROPOSAL (REPORT ITEM 4) (MINUTE NO. 19)

Following the debate on this issue at the August meeting, (Minute 11 and report Item 1 of that meeting refers), the situation has evolved significantly, with the Leadership Group that is leading the bid preparing a prospectus and technical document to support the application. The bid had to be submitted to Government by 4 September. Consequently the Cabinet invited all members of the Council to attend this meeting to consider any final amendments that may be needed to the prospectus and to discuss whether this Council should sign up to the document. The tight timetable for the production of the bid has proved challenging, with the documents continuing to evolve, mainly on editorial matters.

Should the Government select Hampshire and the Isle of Wight for the development of a devolved model of government then further, detailed, consideration will need to be given to the full and wider implications of the deal that is on offer. The Council will retain the right to decide whether it wishes to participate in the “agreed deal”, as will all the constituent authorities. At the moment the process is still in the earliest stages and consequently it is impossible to form a definitive picture of the shape of the proposal that will come forwards from Government in due course. It is expected that the next 5 “trail blazing” areas will be announced during the party conference season; with a further 10 announced at the time of the Autumn Statement; and a remaining 10 at some later stage. The earliest that any new proposals could come into effect would be the spring of 2017.

Any further developments following the Cabinet debate will be reported directly to Council.

2. TREE AND ECOLOGY SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS (REPORT ITEM 2) (MINUTE NO 20)

The Cabinet is recommending that the New Forest National Park Authority should continue to undertake the tree functions on behalf of this Council and also continue to provide an ecological advice service. The Service Level Agreements should therefore be renewed.

The two shared services have worked very well over the last 3 years, with customers now used to the arrangements in place. The quality standards set out in the Agreements have been achieved, as have the projected savings. The arrangements therefore provide good value for money for local Council Taxpayers.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Head of Planning and Transportation be authorised, in consultation with the Planning and Transportation Portfolio Holder, to finalise the terms of the service Level Agreements under which the National Park Authority will be discharging the Council’s functions in respect of tree matters and offering advice on ecological issues.

**Councillor B Rickman
CHAIRMAN**